







B D & C T D. H. C. E. A. L. A. S.

# **THROUGH RAJPUTANA**

**TO**

## **DELHI.**

**BY**  
**CARLTON STUBBS.**

**An Illustrated Guide to the districts reached by the  
Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway.**

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE GATE OF INDIA.



O the majority Bombay is the outward and visible sign of India. Owing to the increase in its trade and wealth, there are many who gain their first, and therefore most lasting, impression of the country here, and nowhere could more erroneous impressions be obtained. But for its palm trees and its dusky inhabitants, Bombay might be a city in any part of the world. Its buildings rival those of many an imposing English town, and there is little of the low, red-tiled bungalow which pictures have made familiar since childhood-days. This is of the European quarter of the town, the Fort, which occupies the part between the native town, the bazaar, and the strip of land once the Island of Colaba, now part of the main Island, given over almost entirely to a military population. Stretching to the north lies the densely populated native town, and here one meets a semi-reformed native city, for the stamp of the European is everywhere. The Island, separated from the mainland by two narrow creeks and the Island of Salsette, stretches in a long tapering strip north and south, and so forms one of the best

harbours in the world, which, coupled with the fact that it is the most accessible point of call and the most central for the distribution of the great Indian trade, has made it what it is to-day, a city not of palaces but of palatial buildings. In many respects Bombay is like a distant suburb of London with all the energy which centres round



Sunset, Malabar Hill, Bombay.

the heart of that city. Every race is to be found. Nominally Europeans are the leaders of the city's commerce. Actually the Europeans are now in a hand-to-hand fight in commerce with the natives who have learned by what past generations of Anglo-Indians have taught ; and the lesson has been well learned. Almost all of the finest buildings, excluding Government offices, belong to native gentlemen who carry on their trade on a scale that instantly affects the markets of Europe.

It is out of the harbour which has allowed of such enormous trade that many trace the name. The Maratha name is Mumbai, which is derived from Mahim or "Great Mother," a title of Devi. From this the Portuguese produced Mombaim and subsequently Bombaim, while popular etymology traces the name from the Portuguese "Buon-Bahia" or "fair haven." Though now proudly described as *Urbs prima in Indis*, Bombay was not the first seat of the British in Western India.

Prior to 1661 Surat was the principal port, but with the marriage of Charles II in that year to Catherine de Braganza, Bombay was included as part of the dowry. Legend has it that the Island was given "as much as a man can walk round," and that the envoy who was sent to take possession, availing himself of low tide, waded through a shallow creek and so secured a second island. Whether this be true or no, Salsette, the now important adjacent island, remained in the hands of the Portuguese whose influence is felt both there and in the still Portuguese territory of Goa, farther down the coast. In 1668 the King transferred the Island to the East India Company for a rental of £10 a year in gold, and immediate measures were taken to develop its revenues and to give it adequate fortification. At the time of its presentation to the British, the population was estimated at ten thousand. In 1673 Dr. Fryer visited India, and in the very full account from which most of what is known of the history of



Bombay is derived, describes the population as about sixty thousand. To-day it is pressing close on the heels of a million. Fryer says that the inhabitants were "a mixture of most of the neighbouring countries, mostly rogues and vagabonds." To-day it is, possibly, even more cosmopolitan, and judging by the criminal records it has yet to be purged of vice.

The actual annexation of the Island took place in 1663 when Mr. Humphrey Cook found "a pretty, well-seated, but ill-fortified house, four brass guns being the whole defence of the Island." He could hardly have foreseen the heavy batteries which now line the coast from Elephanta to Mahaluxmi, and the net-work of mines which covers the bed of the harbour and its approach. In a lesser degree Bombay is as the Khyber—a strong gate which few would care to assault. But while the Khyber is in very truth a forbidding gate, Bombay smiles pleasantly—a green garden set on a sea which laps lazily against it for eight months out of the year and rages in a perpetual storm in the monsoon for the remaining few. To-day it is the garden which the busy man needs around him for recreation, but Mr. Cook formed a different picture: "About the house is a delicate garden, voiced to be the pleasantest in India, intended rather for wanton dalliance, Love's artillery, than to make resistance against an invading foe," from which one may gather that King Charles' envoy was somewhat of a poet with a practical side to his

nature. The poet possibly predominated in his choice of a site for his castle, for Captain Hamilton, who visited Bombay some twenty years later, found fault and said, " Had it been built about five hundred paces more to the southward on a more acute point of rocks, called Mendham's point, it would have been much better on several accounts." Mendham's point is known to but few in Bombay to-day, for passing generations have become accustomed to other names and not all that have heard the old name could identify it with Colaba Causeway or point out the spot where an old landmark lies behind walls as a record that here was Mendham's point and Mendham's cemetery.

When Fryer visited the Island the luxury of the East had already become apparent in the life at the castle for he writes: " The President has a large Commission and is Vice-Regis ; he has a Council here also, and a guard when he walks or rides abroad, accompanied with a party of horse, which are constantly kept in the stables, either for pleasure or service. He has his Chaplains, Physician, Chirurgeons and Domestics, his Linguist and Mint Master. At meals he has his trumpets usher in his courses and soft music at the table. If he move out of his chamber, the Silver Staves wait on him ; if downstairs the guard receive him ; if he go abroad, the Bandarines and Moors, under two standards, march before him. He goes sometimes in his coach drawn by large

milk-white oxen, sometimes on horseback, other times in palanquins carried by cochors, Mussulman porters, always having a *Sumbrero* of State, carried over him, and those of the English, inferior to him, have a suitable train."

The President of Bombay for the East India Company in 1873 was Sir Gerald Aungier, to whom was due the great improvement in the fortifications which frightened away the Dutch, and who, having subdued an incipient mutiny, founded the city of Bombay which has grown to its present dimensions. At the time the inhabitants were chiefly Kolis, a race which exists to-day and carries on the primitive but important fishing trade along the coast. Conjecture alone can say what was the nature of the Island then. Now the Fort stands high and dry, an eminently suitable site for residence, but the large open space which lies behind the Government buildings in Esplanade Road, and also what is now the Apollo Bunder, one of the fashionable districts, are modern reclamations, and it is highly probable that the whole of the centre of the Island was exceedingly swampy. Indeed there can have been no place that was otherwise than damp and unhealthy. The death-rate among Europeans was appalling and, with some exaggeration perhaps, it was said that two monsoons was usually the limit of a man's life on the Island. But despite the evidence that the power of the sun was recognised by Fryer's mention of a *Sumbrero*, it is more than likely that a

Large portion of the death-rate was due to neglect and ignorance of the conditions which must be observed for the maintenance of health in India. Aungier's first attempt at city founding was at Mazagon, a district yet showing traces of its former popularity. There are still some fine old houses there but most of them are now dilapidated, though the presence of the Byculla Club, the premier Club of India, proves how recent was the migration



Figures at Elephanta Caves.

to the healthier part of Malabar Hill. Mazagon to-day is peopled by Portuguese and Eurasians who cannot afford the excessive rents which prevail in other parts of the city. Here is one of the problems of the future for the Government. The trade in its growth has brought such an increase in the European population, that there is scarcely accommodation for it. The difficulty is increased by another class of the population demanding residence in the same districts. Driven out of Persia by the Mahomedans on account of their

adherence to the teachings of Zoroaster and the worship of fire, the Parsis migrated slowly down Northern India till they found a home under the settled rule of Bombay. Like the Jews, whom, in many respects, they resemble, the Parsis have done more than their share in building up the fortunes of Bombay. In all but religion they have become Europeanised and, distinct from the Hindus and Mahomedans who, though often rich, crowd into the stifling dens of the native town, they demand the space and fresh air without which the European cannot live in a tropical climate. Enterprising financiers have seized on every available inch on the Apollo Bunder and facing the Back Bay and have erected flats, but still the accommodation is insufficient and house rent is exorbitant. Flats, smaller than houses in fashionable suburbs of London which can be obtained for fifty or sixty pounds a year, here cost from one hundred and fifty to four hundred rupees a month or £120 to £300 a year. Taking this into consideration the "princely salaries," a dream of the past when competition was less, dwindle to very moderate proportions and must continue to do so. In the military stations in India, Government has set apart areas, called cantonments, in which officers can always obtain a residence at a rate proportionate to their pay. To adopt this principle in its entirety for the commercial class is, of course, impossible, but the commercial class is as important to the welfare of India as is the military force for its safety, and the time must come when

steps will have to be taken to secure accommodation for Europeans at reasonable rates. Already the question has been raised in the local Legislative Council on the point of the encroachment of the rich native population on Malabar Hill, a district once sacred to the "Sahib," but the customary howl of indignation by the native members stifled the discussion. Only to those who have lived in the East is it possible to comprehend fully the reason why European prestige must be maintained, but it is an important fact, and Bombay and Calcutta, and Madras in a minor degree, offer difficult problems in this delicate matter.

There is but ~~one~~ native city in India which has been built on European principles, Jaipur, and Bombay is essentially a Eurasian city. Commenced by Aungier and increasing always under European supervision it has yet followed the lines which have been followed in all the cities of India. Progress and expansion are things of next year not of this and the native whose very life depends on the simple fact of a good or a bad monsoon, looks only to the present. He has learned nothing of sanitation because his methods in life do not call



Bombay Bunder Boats.

for sanitation as it is understood in the West, and the tortuous streets and gulleys which thread the bazaar show that it is but an aggrandized village of the fields. A Municipal Corporation which, like its fellow bodies in England, is apt to deal with what is described in the "Spanish Student" as "too much tablecloth and too little meat," and a body of later creation, the Improvement Trust, have done much, and already the Esplanade Road and Hornby Row show what can be done to evolve order from chaos ; but despite enormous sums spent on the native town little result is to be seen.

Passing from the broad main streets of the Fort, past the Bori Bunder or Victoria Terminus one is suddenly confronted with streets so narrow that with difficulty two carts can pass. No footways separate the leisurely pedestrian from the wheeled traffic and driving through the bazaar can only be accomplished at the expense of incessant shouting on the part of the *ghariwalla* and no small strain on the nerves until one has become accustomed to the native's facility for escaping what seems like certain death by a fraction of an inch. What a change is here from that which has been left in the Fort. Following the example set by Government and under the care of the Improvement Trust the main streets of the Fort are regular in design. Tall pillars support the wide balconies which run along the floors of one block in Esplanade Road and the whole recalls the schemes

of the two Woods who designed Bath. The modern house in Bombay is essentially solid, and, though expense often precludes the thick walls of fifty years ago, modern means are found for keeping out the heat of the street, and indoors, even in the hottest months of May and October, Bombay is never really oppressive. Even in the streets, where the glare often makes the eyes ache, the light lines of the buildings are conducive to a feeling of coolness. Near the Apollo Bunder is an open site where, eventually, is to be raised a museum of Western India; close beside it stands the Elphinstone College, called after Mountstuart Elphinstone, than whom no Governor has done more to improve the conditions of the people or to benefit the Presidency which bears the name of its chief city, while a stone's throw to the north is the garden in which stand the University Buildings. To appreciate these, however, it is necessary to go to the sea-front where the whole line stands out in varying detail but making a whole which more than anything else justifies Bombay's reputation for fine buildings.

But fine as this expanse looks in the day or tinged by the glow of the setting sun, it can never approach the effect gained when for nearly half a mile this sea-front bid the future King Emperor God-speed from the city in a blaze of light. Bunting is apt to be tawdry and the decorations of that time differed little from those to be found at any time in other cities. But illumination in the East is an art of which



the West knows nothing. Gaining their beauty from the delicacy of their lines these buildings more than any others offer scope for the illuminator. The flaring gas jet is not required to give its flickering light for India has a better method. Thousands and thousands of little square tin and glass *buttees* filled in each line and curve, with the great clock tower crowning all, making it a veritable fairy palace. But the ordinary visitor to Bombay must needs be content with the common every-day appearance, and will turn with delight across the open space to another structure nestling in the trees where such prosaic work as the conduct of a railway is carried on in the most delightful building which Bombay possesses. At the time of the illuminations in November 1905 an unexplained accident caused the building to be burned out, but fortunately the walls were left, and careful repair has given back to the city its finest specimen of the combination of Eastern and Western architecture. A few yards further is the Back Bay and from the deck of the incoming steamer the offices of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway stand up as one of the few distinguishable landmarks. Standing where it does with its cupolas crowning each corner, its graceful pillars and its tower rising from four central domes in narrowing tiers to the great crowning dome it seems more like one of the palaces which many visit India to see than what it really is.

Hard by is a statue of Queen Victoria, the Queen of the old rupees, seated beneath a delicately



**Floral Fountain, Bombay.**

carved canopy. The statue was presented to the city by the Gaekwar of Baroda and stands on a wide white marble plinth rising by steps to one of the most artistic modern statues in India, perhaps in the world.

A few yards away stands the Gymkhana where can be enjoyed almost any sport in which an Englishman's heart delights. Here are some half dozen tennis courts, a bowling green has temporarily disappeared, near by is a racquets court, here are organised football and cricket teams and here every morning at sunrise is to be seen a body of enthusiasts who wield the driver, brasseys and cleeks as keenly as ever was seen at ancient St. Andrew's. Here, however, golf has been played under conditions which make the stranger shudder. A few years ago it was no uncommon thing to drive off from the tee and to land into a body lying wrapped up in a sheet. The native caddie recovered the ball and took it for granted that you knew you had played into a plague victim. Every morning the Maidan had its roll of dead bodies, every dawn saw many inert forms stir into life leaving their night companions stark in the rising sun. It was the year of the greatest visitation of plague. But time flies quickly and memories are short and those days are now little more than a memory. Yet plague still scourges the native town at certain times. Nevertheless the life of the city goes smoothly on, and the number of deaths serves but as a topic to fill up an awkward pause at the dinner

table and to set conversation flowing in fresh directions. And the native views the matter with almost equal equanimity. There are three essential parts of a native's life—*kismet*—fate—*dustoor*—custom—and *backshis*—but everyone who has been five minutes in the country knows the meaning of the last. The European, unbending in many things but vastly accommodating in others,



The Bazaar.

has adopted the first two, and though energetic medical men slave to find the means of stamping out the scourge the remainder of those who day by day read the fluctuations in the city's mortality pass on unconcerned for they have the comforting assurance of past experience that plague rarely seizes Europeans.

The native population has to a great extent become accustomed to the state of affairs and

though the exodus from the city in the height of the epidemic is large, plague is now treated with somewhat of indifference and the preventive means suggested, in the form of inoculation, finds little favour.

The wonder is that disease is not more prevalent in Indian cities. The overcrowding which is condemned in London is nothing to that of the native town. Rooms scarcely six feet square and often with no window for ventilation lie off dark passages in houses rising on either side of almost impassable lanes. The main thoroughfares of the bazaar are narrow enough, the side roads may easily escape notice and yet passing through them throughout the day is an endless stream of one of the most picturesque crowds in the world. Side by side with the coolie, whose dress consists of a tightly girt loin cloth, walks the Bannia resplendent in brilliant colours and a gold turban. Between them darts a naked urchin. It is only experience that can trace the distinctive dresses of the various classes, castes and creeds. The Parsi with his oil cloth hat, supposed to resemble an ox foot, is distinct from all the rest, both by his head dress and by his cleaner cut features, and the low gold turban of the rich Mahomedan is distinct from that of the Hindu, but below this there are infinite gradations, and it long remains a wonder how the gharri-wallah as he drives at no mean pace through the crowd with his incessant cry of *ahaih ahai*, *Baba-ji lao* can tell each man at sight often to emphasize his

warning, adding *ahai Haji* or some mere obscure term which always seems to fulfil its purpose.

But what most strikes the visitor fresh from the West is the openness of everyone's life. Away behind the streets is the jealously guarded home, for an Indian's home, far more than an Englishman's, is his castle. Judging from the crowds of women to



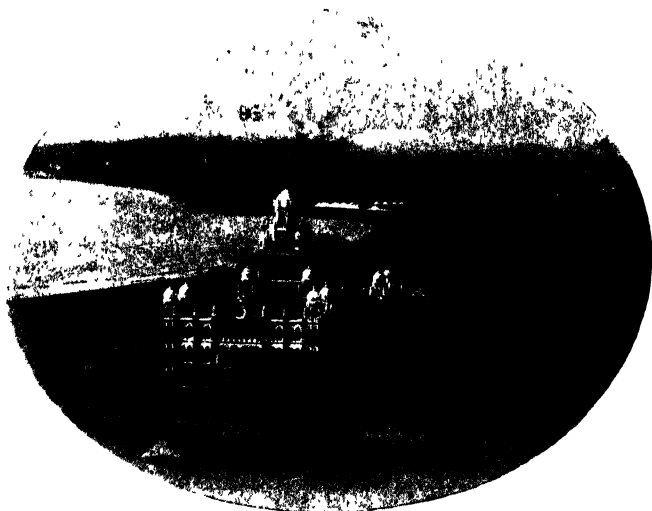
The Break of the Monsoon, Apollo Bunder.

be seen in the streets, it might be thought that the *purdah* was an imagination of the missionary. But the *purdah* is a very real thing, as is found whenever the census has to be taken, so real that there is extreme doubt whether the figures obtained can ever approach accuracy. The reason is not far to seek, not only may you not see a *purdah* lady, but it is the height of bad manners, amounting

almost to an insult, even to speak of her. The woman seen in the street is, in nine cases out of ten, a coolie, and though many Hindu ladies of higher caste may be seen driving and walking, the majority, both of Hindu and Mahomedan ladies, are never seen.

The Indian has two lives, that of his home, a sealed book, and that of his business life. And the two are as different from each other as they possibly can be. The shop usually consists of a little wooden box, raised a few feet from the ground, and the floor acts as floor, shelves and counter. The purchaser stands in the street, states his demand and bargains, jostled by the passing crowd. An old acquaintance probably climbs into the shop by the piece of rope which invariably hangs in front and squats on the floor. In this case the transaction of business is by no means rapid. The Indian has no idea of the meaning of fixed prices. Each man who comes to buy is assessed and the price arranged accordingly. But the seller knows that he will not get what he asks. He also knows that in the end he will sell at a more or less definite price ; but it is part of the game of life to ask more. To be asked fifteen rupees for a brass pot and eventually, after perhaps half an hour's bartering and bartering, obtain it for two rupees eight annas, a drop from a sovereign to three shillings and four pence, sounds extraordinary, but it is done hour by hour, and the misguided European, who buys in the bazaar and pays what is asked, usually finds that his fame precedes him with

an accompanying increase in prices. Usually, however, the European has little time for such argument and, for bartering at its highest pitch, one must catch a glimpse of the native buyer. Shopping everywhere is a matter of moment, but here it becomes of absorbing interest. A crowd gathers, advises, criticises, approves, condemns; may be the friendly visitor squatting cross-legged on the floor



Head Offices, B. B. & C. I. Railway, Bombay.

takes a contemplative pull at the *hqua* or *hookah* and assists in the performance. A purchase is eventually effected, and the customer moves off. A few of the crowd remain hoping for more excitement, but in the end the two are left together. Conversation rambles over a variety of topics, things undreamed of in our European philosophy, and things as humdrum as the local policeman's delinquencies, the somewhat questionable fire in Ram Bux's shop, ten



doors away. Finally the object of the visit is casually mentioned and dropped. Later it is mentioned again and possibly, this time, the article is compared with something similar sold by Ram Bux at a third of the price. It is recalled that Ram Bux was underselling, and there is a silent impression that the fire may have saved him from bankruptcy. Each side reaches its final figure, and they do not agree. More talk on general matters and the purchaser prepares to



A Typical Street.

depart, he even climbs down with the aid of the rope to the street below, moves away a yard, and then somehow prices agree, the prices, be it understood, that each had fixed in his mind an hour before ; and the deal is finished. Only in the East where yesterday, to-day and to-morrow are synonymous could such a thing be.

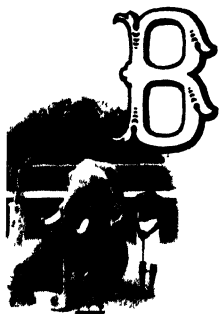
Another street shows the weaver at work with a fragile hand loom ; close by is the carver making ivory bangles, the silversmith beating out a design. Elsewhere, for trades gather in special

districts, are the silk and cloth merchants and a thousand nondescript occupations. Bombay is a city of contrasts. Away to the north of the Island can be seen tall factory chimneys belching forth smoke day and night, and that smoke represents nearly half of Bombay's wealth. Lancashire looks on enviously, for here labour is cheap, and for coarser piece-goods Bombay toils and sweats, the market of the great Indian cotton fields. Lancashire taught India how to spin cotton, and the pupil is now so serious a competitor that the cotton county sent deputations to the Secretary of State and demanded intervention in the way of more stringent factory regulations. The hours of work, it was said, were too long and on the face of things they were, but it must always be remembered that the Indian does not work continuously. Something will be done to govern factory life, but the action will be based on facts, not on the exaggerated statements which crop up from time to time and fire competitors, with the hope of restraining so powerful a rival.

Europe has laid its stamp on India, has given it modern machinery, the results of modern science, triumphs of engineering ; much has been done to ward off the famines which follow on a poor monsoon ; the West is everywhere but it is only on the surface. Beneath, the East has moved a little, a very, very little, towards Western ideas but the character of centuries is not changed quickly and the East must be measured by its own standards.

## CHAPTER II.

### IN INDIA.



BECAUSE Bombay is so encased in the products of European workers it is none the less a place that repays exploration. "The sights" can be visited in one day or two at the outside, for the conveniences of transit over the limited area of the island enable the drive which includes all the principal places of interest to be taken in a few hours.

From the Apollo Bunder it is but a short distance to the Afghan Memorial Church in Middle Colaba, a splendid monument to splendid deeds, and this and the Cotton Green, where some hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth of cotton are stored each season, are the only features worthy of notice and a drive beyond the Church serves but to show some excellent specimens of



Yachting, Bombay Harbour.

“bungalows”, for the Defence Works, the chief item of Colaba, are carefully guarded from the public. From Colaba a return is made past the Government Buildings and the B.B. & C.I. offices along Queens-road, the city’s marine drive which reclamations have pushed back far from the water’s edge, and it is difficult to pass along without encountering the smoke of some funeral pyre in the Hindu Burning Ghat, for, in whatever else the Hindu may be behind the European, his religion enjoins on him a rude form of cremation. The road is deservedly popular as a drive for while on the one side are high trees reaching far over the road, on the other are young palms which break the line of brown grass stretching to the sea. From half past five to eight every evening the sight here is a gay one. Two never ending streams of carriages, from the imposing pair with scarlet liveries to something far less smart than a coster’s cart on Derby Day, with here and there a *reckla*, a curious canoe-shaped vehicle cut square in front covered with a canopy like a howdah, drawn by bullocks which have a habit of looking at you as they trot as if convinced that they appear ridiculous. Parsi ladies in brilliant saris, which would hurt the eye by their colour anywhere but beneath a tropical sun, make a brilliant contrast to the cooler whites and subdued colours of the European ladies’ dresses. Prancing horses draw carriages shabby beyond description, little rats of ponies draw others that would be smart in Bond Street, and amidst all moves the “tikka gharry,” Bombay’s hansom

which is hired at the rate of four annas a drive or eight annas an hour in the Fort, and little more for longer drives and is exactly what one would expect for the price.

But he who thinks that because he is far East of Suez he is in a country where comfort, luxury and elegance are not is grievously mistaken. Each and all are to be found here and Mr. Jones of Streatham who has a fairly good post in Bombay lives in a style as good as any country squire at Home.

From Queens-road the drive leads up Malabar Hill, a delightfully shady road with a wood-covered hill on one side and glimpses of the sea on the other, to Government House, as delightful a situation as could be found for a house throughout the world. Here, as the name implies, the Governor lives when not at Poona or Mahableshwar for the rains or hot weather. Malabar Point, however, has no historical association and the Government House from which most of the middle history of Bombay emanated in the shape of short orders and long resolutions in Government documents is at Parel, now a plague research laboratory where millions of rats have been dissected for the purpose of proving that Bombay's scourge of plague is spread by rats and the fleas which infest them till death enforces a search for a new habitation—too often the denizen of the native town. Therefore there is a crusade against rats, carried on under difficulties, for the Hindu is for-

bidden to take life—a provision which does not prevent him torturing his bullock or horse in a way that, despite the protests of the Humanitarian League, could only be adequately punished by flogging. The ordinary Hindu, however, is content now to allow the Sahib to carry out his plans of rat extermination while he looks the other way. Not so the Jain, who carries the dogma to excess and will not even wear leather shoes because they have entailed the killing of an animal. The Jains control the grain trade and here of course the rats abound in myriads. And so plague goes on.

Turning away from Government House with its pleasant approach the road runs along “The Ridge” to the Hanging Gardens, the typically tropical spot of Bombay. Standing in the crow’s nest here one looks across the Back Bay, a stretch, totally unlike the Bay of Naples with which it is often compared, backed by the roofs and domes of the city and great black masses of tall palms. Back Bay at sunset time, when the sun in a flaming red ball drops suddenly into the sea, is a sight never to be forgotten and the loveliest that Bombay offers.

Close by are the “Towers of Silence” and near, sitting on palms and walls, are loathsome vultures waiting for their charnel feast. For here is another mode of burial in India. The Mahomedan buries his dead, the Hindu, as we have seen, has adopted cremation, the Parsi places the

corpse out in a small open tower where the flesh is eaten by vultures and the bones bleach in the sun till they fall through a grating and are carried away. To enter the grounds, as at the Burning Ghat, is forbidden without a pass and here at the Towers of Silence the pass admits only to the surrounding garden. Into the Tower itself no one must enter but the few whose hereditary duty it is to perform the office of carriers of the dead. They it is, who, wrapped up in swathes of bandages, place the bodies in the scoops made to receive



The Towers of Silence.

them. To the Parsi the spirit is all, and early in the morning and at sunset one may see them in hundreds round the Back Bay performing their devotions, but the dead body is unclean and the tender of the dead is unclean. In many places it is written that these carriers are a separate caste. Caste is so dominating a factor in Indian life that the word slips into use in many ways, but here it is wrongly used for the Parsis have no caste. The key to the highest circles of Parsi society is

a golden key and the workers at the Towers of Silence are excluded from social intercourse, firstly because their trade is unclean, secondly because it is revolting. Who seeks the company of an undertaker at his table ?

A turn to the left at the foot of the hill leads round to the sea which lies at the back of Malabar ridge and brings one to the Mahaluxmi Battery and, further still, to the race-course where weekly meetings are held during the cold weather. Behind this are the mills rattling out a monotonous song of wealth from a steamy atmosphere and one regains the Fort through the heart of the native town.

Those who have driven here in the day time must do so again at night. Then the narrow gullies, which in the pitiless strength of the Indian sun have no feature to redeem them from ugliness, become dark and mysterious with faint lights twinkling like fireflies in the blackness. In the shop which is still open a European lamp gives a brilliant light, but the real Indian lamp is a piece of rough wick floating in a pool of cocoanut oil and resting on the edge of a shallow brass or earthenware saucer. The smell of the burning oil accentuates the smell of the day and one gets in full the peculiar odour of the East. Analyse it and it sounds impossible, but it is a smell which gets into the brain and fascinates, and the smell of the East is made up of incense, spices, garlic, cow-dung, goats and oil. Anywhere but here the open drains at the sides of the roads would be unbearable,



but if a headache result from a drive through the native town it is from the shoutings of the *gharry-wallah* and the sudden awful fears lest you may become a modern car of Jaggernath. The smell of the East seizes one and, once loved, it is never forgotten. It holds men to India, it draws them back over six thousand miles and must have accounted for how much of the devotion which has characterised the work of our rulers in India, from the Viceroy to the last joined subaltern and "Heaven-Born" Civilian.

The bazaar is left behind and the properly accredited visitor drives down to the Yacht Club to join in a crowd purely English and far more fashionable than that of many an English Town. A green lawn looks over the harbour where steamers, ranging from the liner to the tramp and curious native boats with masts leaning towards the prow, with the black Islands of Karanja and Elephanta and the rugged Western Ghats behind, give the picture of commerce in its most picturesque aspect. But this is not India.

Sir John Strachey whose "India, Its Administration and Progress" has become a standard work on an intricate subject asks the question "What is India?" Sir Henry Maine commenting on the ignorance which prevails amongst Englishmen as regards India postulates that, for those who wish to grasp the wonderful interest which the word contains, the first necessity is that he should not shrink from speaking on matters which

appear to him too elementary to deserve discussion, that he should sympathise with an ignorance which few felicitous efforts have yet been made to dispel and that he should remember that the language of Administration and Government in India has become so highly specialised and technical that it forms an imperfect medium for the communication of ideas to Englishmen. If Bombay be the sole place to be visited such knowledge matters little, but the moment one steps into the train, which is to lead on to the distant cities which have their own special claims, there is one great thing to remember and that is that there is no such country. India is a continent not a country, made up of a hundred races as different as those of all Europe and presenting more changes in physical feature than can be found in any continent in the world with, perhaps, the exception of Africa.

To the average English mind the word India is synonymous with heat and damp, luxuriant vegetation. The reason is not difficult to discover. Most of the early stories of India came from Madras where an ancestor of the present Viceroy, Lord Minto, landed in a manner highly undignified



for a Governor-General. Since then the India of British occupation has extended. The Punjab has spread out into the Frontier Province which has changed its name to that more familiar to-day, the North-West Provinces, and in these two, in the short space between summer and winter, can be found the extremes of climate which will allow an egg to be fried by cracking it over a piece of metal



Types from Rajputana.

which has been three hours in the sun, and a cold which beats through tightly closed doors, a blazing fire and a thick *poshtin* of sheepskin. On the other hand while Madras and Lower Bengal present the old picture of dense green tropical vegetation, within a few hundred miles are arid

plains where, except for the few months of the rains, the earth is perpetually a dull, sun-burned, brown and even sandy desert with not a vestige of growth in any direction. A Russian and a Spaniard would probably find their common language in French ; a Bengali and a Parsi or Punjabi Sikh would find their common language in English. They are distinct races, their religions differ, their languages are unintelligible to each other. To reduce the field to smaller dimensions, the Parsi, the most genuinely educated native of India, would be hopelessly at sea in trying to converse with one of the rough hill tribes which live in the Ghats. The Parsi and the Bhil are as different as Pole and Spaniard, yet in the sense which is applied to the word countries in Europe there are no countries in India. In his *Asiatic Studies* Sir Alfred Lyall says :—

“Geographical boundaries have no correspondence at all with distinctive institutions or groupings of the people, and have comparatively little political significance. Little is gained towards knowing who and what a man is by ascertaining the State he obeys or the territory he dwells in ; these being things which of themselves denote no difference of race, institutions or manners. Even from the point of political allegiance, the Government, under which a man may be living, is an accidental arrangement which the British Viceroy or some other inevitable power decided upon yesterday and may alter to-morrow. Nor would such a change be grievous unless it divorced from him a ruler of his own tribe or his own faith. The European observer—accustomed to the massing of people in great territorial groups, and to the

ideas (now immemorial in the West) contained in such expressions as fatherland, mother-country, patriotism, domicile and the like—has here to realise the novelty of finding himself in a strange part of the world, where political citizenship is as yet quite unknown and territorial sovereignty or even feudalism only just appearing. For a parallel in the history of Western Europe, we must go back as far as the Merovingian period when Chiefs of barbaric tribes or bands were converting themselves into Kings or Counts ; or, perhaps, he should carry his retrospect much further, and conceive himself to be looking at some country of Asia Minor, lying within the influence of Rome at its zenith, but just outside its jurisdiction. He gradually discovers the population of Central India to be distributed, not into great governments or nationalities, or religious denominations, not even into widespread races such as those which are still contending for political supremacy in Eastern Europe, but into various and manifold denominations of tribes, clans, septs, castes, and sub-castes, religious orders and devotional brotherhoods ! ”

There is nothing more difficult in dealing with India than to describe these divisions which are so potent and yet so impalpable. Any one can tell the difference between the Madrassi, the Rajput and the Pathan, but they are extremes. Sir Alfred Lyall has very lucidly explained their nature, and before moving out into India it will be well to understand their *raison d'être*.

There is no true history of India before the Mahomedan conquest. The early inhabitants, known as non-Aryans, to distinguish them from the later



Back Bay from Malabar Hill, Bombay.

immigrants, called Aryans, were without civilization, and there are no records, but Hindu sacred literature, some of which relates to a time not later than 2000 B.C., gives the outline of the story of progress. The old Aryan homes were between the Caspian and Aral and the country south thereof. Some migrated northwards through Russia to Germany, Sweden, France, England and Greece, some to Persia and others to India. At the time of the great migration the system of Government was patriarchal, the father was ruler and priest combined. On their arrival in India they found the country, in contrast to their own fair degree of civilisation, peopled by dark-skinned savages, who worshipped demons and lived chiefly by hunting, and from their repugnant habits they were looked upon as people whom it was right to exterminate. The march of the Aryans to the great plain of India was therefore one continuous struggle, and when their position was secured, the conquered aborigines became their slaves. With the settlement of the question of the common foe, dissensions sprang up amongst the new race, family fought family, bands of other families joined up, making tribes, and the demarcation of territory at the point of the arrow and spear became the method of rule just as it continued till the British took charge and restored order throughout the land. Centuries passed during which the conquest of the Punjab was effected, but the restless spirit still lived and the Aryan trend stretched still southward into Central India and the Deccan. Meanwhile tribes came to acknowledge the over-

chiefship of some great leader and so kingdoms came into existence.

The chief occupation was agriculture and the fertility of the Indian soil gave a great impetus to the growing of wheat and barley, their chief articles of diet, but, strange as it may seem to their descendants, meat was not excluded from their diet and there are frequent references in the Vedic Hymns to the killing of cattle for food. At this time there was an absence of caste. The word Varna which came to mean "caste" at first meant only colour and was used to distinguish the fair conquerors from the black aborigines and even this is not found until the tenth book of the Veda, from which the history is pieced together, and this was written at a later date.

The religion of the time was the worship of the Powers of Nature, but the Rishis, or men skilled for their ability in composing hymns, the educated men and therefore the spiritual leaders, gradually worked out the idea of a central controlling force over nature. The Rishis began to form themselves into a class apart from the others. In time new works came explaining the old hymns and their ritual and these books, known as the Brahmanas, came, in time, to be no less sacred than the hymns themselves. Briefly, therefore, here is the origin of caste. First the distinction of Aryan from non-Aryan, then the rise of the educated and priestly class. Then professions and trades tended to become hereditary and the popu-



lation became divided into the Brahmans, the priesthood, the Kshattriyas, the best of the military element, formed of the families of kings and nobles whose ancestors had led the Aryan invasion, the Vaisyas, the general population, and the Sudras or subjected non-Aryans and those of mixed descent.

With this classification of the race and the formation of a priestly class a great change took place in the religion. From the old joyous religion



The Ryot : " Eighty per cent. of India."

of the worship of nature the Brahmans brooded over their deities and something akin to religious mania introduced the elements which have led to the pessimistic religion of the Hindu of to-day. Caste now is a mysterious thing which few except the most learned Hindus understand. It has its advantages and disadvantages, but there is no doubt that its introduction was for the advantage of the race at that time. Under the Brahmans the number of caste distinctions multi-

plied and more rigid rules were introduced. The tendency to heredity in professions led to great resentment of outside competition and gradually rites and usages peculiar to callings were built up as barriers for protection.

Towards the close of the seventh century before Christ the Brahman influence began to wane. In the year 557 B.C. was born to King Suddhodana a son Siddhantha, afterwards called Gautama. Prone to meditation he gradually ceded from the Hindu religion, and in the end abandoning his claim to his father's kingdom, set out as a beggar to learn "The Truth." At last he found the truth that salvation lay in a well-governed life and love and pity for all things, and so he became "Buddha," "The Enlightened", who spread his doctrine over not only India but the whole of the Far East. Two hundred years later India was again invaded by the King of Macedon, Alexander the Great, with results too well-known to need record here. Up till recent years all India's blessings and ills have come from the North-West. To-day there is a never sleeping guard on the Khyber watching for the time, if ever it come, when a modern army shall attempt to pass modern defences which, with the natural formation of the hills, make the most perfect frontier gateway in the world. Alexander after waiting at Taxila marched towards Jhelum to meet Porus whom he surrounded in the marshes. It will not be a hand to hand fight when next the Khyber wakes to the echo of war

but of heavy artillery lying out of sight, perfect in its action, commanding every inch of the Pass.

To follow the lines of kings, the changing dynasties which followed the invasion of Alexander, the reader must be referred to the minute histories which have been compiled in fair number. The knowledge would serve little purpose to the ordinary traveller for, with few exceptions, nothing remains of those times to need history to unravel their mysteries. What is far more important for the visitor to Rajputana is some outline of the rise of the race which governs the wide tract which bears its name. For two hundred years after the fall of Kanauj, the court of the great king Siladitya, in about 750 A.D., when the town was sacked by the Kashmir King Lalitaditya, there is practically no known history of India. Fragments have been discovered, but they cannot be linked into any coherent whole. All that is definitely known is that the time coincides with the fall of Buddhism and the growth of a new Power, the Rajputs. Their origin is unknown, but it is supposed they were foreign invaders who adopted Hinduism, but as they were probably the cause of the fall of Buddhism in India, legend flatters them by ascribing their origin to the four Kshatriyas, recreated to drive out the enemies of the Vedas. Probably they were Scythians, but this is mere conjecture. Soon we find them masters of the Deccan and Gujerat while other tribes emigrated to Central and even Northern India to found

kingdoms. In two centuries the face of India was changed, Brahman supremacy was restored and the Rajputs ruled in the old capitals which were monuments of a time when parts of the Old Testament had yet to be written.

At the time of this second great racial invasion, a new religion was spreading eastwards from Arabia. Hinduism taught the worship of many gods. Buddhism came for a time and taught that there was no need of gods only of good works. Islamism came with the cry, "There is no



Goldsmiths at Work.

god but God," a faith so bold and simple that, combined with its injunction to "strike and spare not" the unbeliever, it is easy to comprehend how it has attained its enormous influence over the whole world.

The first we hear of the Mahomedan invasion of India is the series of attacks made by wandering Arabs on Sind. In 712, however, Muhammad, son of Kassim, led an organised expedition against the Rajput Dahir, King of Sind, where occurred

one of a series of acts of most wonderful heroism. Dahir was surrounded in Alor and eventually killed ; provisions ran short, and the women, preferring death to dishonour, flung themselves on a huge pyre, and after the *sati* the men left the fortress to seek their death, fighting in the open. For two years Muhammad ruled Sind and secured the spread of the Islam faith. Then he was recalled and beheaded, and the Rajputs, before the close of the century, rose and reasserted their old rule.

The Mahomedan invasion was not repeated till the end of the 10th century, by which time the Rajput Princes had firmly established themselves in Western and Northern India.

Then in 979, Jaipal, Prince of Lahore, marched to the Khyber to attack an invading force. The cold forced a retreat, and the Afghans secured a victory. Jaipal agreed to a large indemnity, but when back within the walls of Lahore his attitude changed. The indemnity was refused and Saluktigin, marching on Lahore, wrested from India the Province of Peshawar and the Khyber Pass. His successor, Mahmud of Ghazni, commenced his military career when little more than a child, and his reign is a story of repeated advances into India, ultimately to reach more southern territory and to subdue rebellion in land already conquered. In 1009 the Kings of Delhi, Ujjain and Gwalior banded together, but were defeated at Bhatindah, and in 1021 with their defeat Jaipal II was appointed a Mahomedan Governor at

Lahore. Islam had, in fact, conquered the greater part of Northern India.

The seat of invasion then changes to Ghor near Kandahar when Mahomed Ghorî, who had defeated Ghazni, tried to emulate the successes of Mahmud. Dissensions had sprung up among the Rajput Princes, and the Hindu part of Northern India was divided into two factions. The first march on Delhi resulted in a rout but two years later the attack was renewed and Prithvi captured. This was the first fall of Delhi, and Mahomedanism had advanced to the edge of the Punjab.

Once more Northern India was attacked by an invading race. The Moghuls, led by Chengiz Khan, who commenced life as a small Mongolian Chief and ended by conquering so much territory that he gained the name of the "world stormer," appeared in India. At his death Altamash took the lead, and at Kutab, near Delhi, is the tomb of this the first Moslem Conqueror of India. His son succeeded him, but was deposed after six months, and his sister, who was known as the Sultan Raziya, became the only woman who ever reigned on the Throne of Delhi. As her name implies, she was more noted for masculine qualities than feminine graces, but after two and-a-half years she succumbed to the



A Jemadar.

failing of misplaced affection and suffered the fate of her brother, being put to death.

Dynasty followed dynasty till in 1398 Tamerlane, a descendant of Chengiz Khan, invaded the then Pathan rulers at Delhi after a march that, for sheer ferocity, left his ancestor almost a reputation for humanity. Before the actual siege of Delhi he ordered a massacre of his Indian prisoners in order that he might be unencumbered, and in obedience his soldiers, in a few hours, massacred, it is computed, over a hundred thousand helpless prisoners. Mahmud Tuglak, the Emperor of Delhi fled from the city and only a feeble resistance was made. Promises were broken, the city sacked and Tamerlane proclaimed himself Emperor of Hindustan.

Incessant fighting followed, and in 1526 took place the great battle which placed the Moghuls in ascendancy over the Afghans, and Baber, a descendant of Tamerlane and Chengiz Khan, having proclaimed himself Emperor of India, set out and captured Agra, establishing the rich Moghul Empire.



## CHAPTER III.

### ALONG THE COAST.



THE history of Central India, after this, is written in the great buildings which abound round Delhi and Agra, and in the great red sandstone and marble palaces side by side with old ruins which, even in their decay, tell of the splendour with which these fighting kings liked to surround themselves. This is History to be read on the spot and will so be treated.

Nearer home is the scene of Britain's first fight for power in Western India. As has been mentioned before, Bombay was presented to the British as part of the Dower of Catherine de Braganza in 1661, but British history commences a little earlier. Leaving Bombay by the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway the way passes through some typical scenery of the Indian coast. At the back stretch the Northern spurs of the Western Ghats with palm groves lying at their foot. Stretching to the sea is low land, a marshy swamp for several months of the year where rice grows freely. The way lies across Sal-



sette Island over two fine bridges thrown across the creeks which separate the two islands from the mainland. Salsette was long a stronghold of the Portuguese and the names of a large portion of the inhabitants show their descent. Originally Salsette was well fortified and at Bassein Road there still remain castles which form an excellent venue for picnics. Further on the hills die down and there is nothing to be seen but a broad flat expanse of country eminently suitable for agriculture. For this reason came into existence Surat, one of the chief towns of Gujarat. All historians differ as to the age of the port but local legend places the foundation in 1499. Fourteen years later Barbosa, a Portuguese explorer, found it in a flourishing condition with a busy trade and many ships riding in the roadstead. Up to that time, however, Surat enjoyed a somewhat precarious existence. In 1512 Portuguese invaders burned the town and, as this was repeated twice subsequently, to protect the town the castle was built at the order of the King of Ahmedabad, being finished in about 1546. A little less than thirty years later Akbar with a huge force annexed the province of which he had heard such glowing accounts and so secured a port. A treaty was concluded with the Portuguese which gave them almost unlimited power in the Indian Ocean and as a result other European nations turned their attention to the East. The Dutch rapidly won away



the Portuguese trade and in 1600, on the last day of the year, Elizabeth granted the first Charter to "The Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading with the East Indies." The first British vessel to arrive was brought



Salt Pans.

eight years later when the Portuguese bitterly resented the intrusion. An order was given by the Moghul Viceroy permitting the English to trade and Captain Hawkins set out to see the Emperor Jehangir with a letter from James I. He then obtained promises of assistance and protection, but a

formal treaty was not made and on his return to Surat he found the Portuguese still harassing his men. Sir Henry Middleton arrived in 1611 with three ships but not being allowed to trade replied by capturing a pilgrim ship in the Red Sea. Next year Captain Best arrived with two ships and a trading agreement was concluded, not with the Portuguese however. Two months from his arrival Best found himself shut in at Surat by the Portuguese fleet.

Tavernier describes Surat of that time with the vagueness which characterises old travellers' records. "The vessels that sail to Suratt," he says, "which is the only part in the Empire of the Great Mogul, sail within sight of Diu, and the Point of St. John, and come to anchor afterwards in the road of Couali which is not above four leagues from Suratt and two from the mouth of the river toward the north. They transport their wares from one place to another either by waggons or in boats. For great vessels cannot get into the river of Suratt till they have unladen by reason of the sands that choke it up. The Hollanders return as soon as they have landed their wares at Couali, and so do the English, it not being permitted to either to enter into the river. But some years since, the King has given the English a place to winter in during the rainy season."

"Suratt is a city of indifferent bigness, defended by a pitiful fortress, by the foot whereof you must pass, whether you go by land or by water.

It has four towers at the four corners and in regard there are no platforms upon the walls, guns are planted upon wooden scaffolds. The Governor of the fort only commands the soldiers in the fort, but has no power in the city, which has a particular Governor to receive the King's customs, and other revenues through the extent of his province."

"The walls of the town are only of earth, and the generality of the houses like barns, being built of reeds, plastered with cow-dung to cover the void spaces and to hinder them without from discerning between the reeds what is done within. In all Suratt there be but nine or ten houses which are well built : whereof the Cha-bander, or chief of the merchants, has two or three. The rest belong to the Mahumetan Merchants ; nor are those, wherein the English and Hollanders dwell less beautiful ; every president, and every commander, being careful to repair them ; which they put upon the account of their companies. However, they do but hire those houses ; the King not suffering any Frank to have a house of his own for fear he should make a fortress of it. The Capuchin friars have built them a very convenient convent according to the model of our European houses and a fair church ; for the building of which I furnished them with good part of the money."

For right to trade freely in this place Captain Best in 1612 made his great attack on the Portu-

guese fleet. They were driven back and Captain Best returned to "Swally." The old trading agreement had been confirmed by an Imperial Firman and from this dates the real foundation of our power in India.

Two years later the Portuguese having captured one of the Moghul's ships had fallen into



Surat from the Bunder.

had odour and were debarred from favours. Nicholas Downton had brought a fine fleet but it was almost immediately attacked by an expedition sent up from Goa. A long engagement ended in a half victory for the British ships, and the next of interest that is heard is the arrival of Sir Thomas Roe in 1615 as the Ambassador of James I to the Moghul Court. British prestige was not what it should have been. The merchants were

subjected to great oppression and indignity and Sir Thomas recounts in his diary :—

“Soe base are our conditions in this Port and subject to Soe many slaveryes such as noe free hart can endure, that I doe resolve eyther to establish a trade on free conditions or to doe my best to dissolve yt. For noe profitt can be a good Pennyworth at soe much dishonor ; the person of every man landing locked up and searched like a



A Parsi Priest of Surat.

theefe ; sometymes two dayes before leave can be had for any man to passe the river ; a poore bottle of wyne sent to the sick deteyned ; and every trifle ransacked and taken away with insufferable insolencyes.”

His reply to those who attempted to search him was emphatic and later he obtained from him, who became Shah Jehan, the right for Englishmen to build homes, bear arms, exercise their own religion and to settle their own disputes. Sir Thomas got

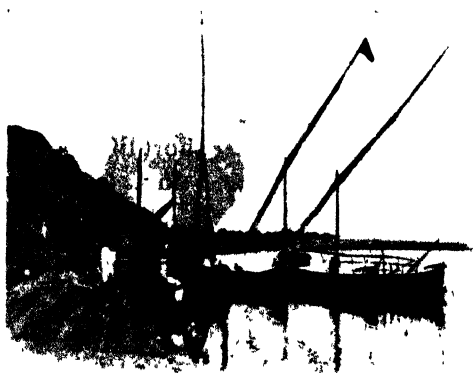
no less than have the astute diplomatists who have given us Shanghai and Hongkong to-day.

The buildings they made became the English "factory" which was fortified in 1642 when its stock was valued at about eighty thousand pounds, but despite their wealth they still had many indignities to bear and their position was maintained only by force. In 1664 Shivaji, the founder of the Mahratta empire, attacked the factory. Shivaji was an admirable specimen of the wily, untrustworthy Mahratta and Sir George Oxinden appreciated his character better than official India does that of his descendants.

Shivaji was only driven back by the approach of the Moghul army, but the power of Surat had been shaken, and when Bombay was given to the Company five years later, the city's prosperity commenced to wane rapidly. Fryer describes the factory, writing in 1674, as "The House the English live in at Surat is partly the King's gift, partly hired ; Built of stone and excellent Timber with good carving without Representations; very strong for that each floor is half a yard thick at least of the best plastered cement, which is very weighty. It is contrived after the Moor's Buildings, with upper and lower galleries or terras-walks ; a neat Oratory, a convenient open Place for meals. The President has spacious lodgings, noble rooms for Council and entertainment, pleasant Tanks, yards, and an Hummum to wash in ; but no gardens in the city or very few, though without they have

many like Wildernesses overspread with Trees. The English had a neat one, but Seva Gi's coming destroyed it. It is known, as the other Factories are, by their several flags flying."

To the north of the English Factory is the site of the Capuchin convent with the French and Portuguese Factories beyond, both now but



Fishing Boats.

occasional foundations. The relics of Surat are, as all over India, relics of a dead past. The finest building of the city is the domed tomb of those "most brotherly of brothers, Christopher and Sir George Oxinden." With its two domes standing on great pillars with staircases leading to the upper galleries it is a fitting monument to the man who resisted an invasion of the king whose name to-day calls up warlike desires. There are epitaphs



of these old Anglo-Indians, quaint reading to-day but none quainter or more pathetic than the one which is pointed out to all visitors :

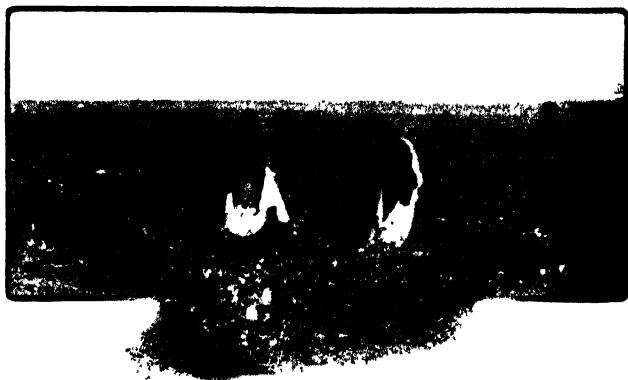
“ In memory of Mary Price, wife of William Andrew Price, Esq., Chief for affairs of the British Nation and Governor of the Moghul's Castle and Fleet of Surat, who, through the spotted veil of the small pox, rendered a pure and unspotted soul to God, expecting but not fearing death which ended her days. April the thirteenth *Anno Domini* 1761, *Aetatis Suae* 23.”

“ The virtues which in her short life were shown,  
Have equalled been by few, surpassed by none.”

Further north, midway between Surat and Baroda is Broach. Seen from the Southern bank of the Narbada near the railway bridge, the stout stone wall rising from the river's edge and running for nearly a mile along the bank gives an imposing appearance to the town. Once indeed it was an important place in British commerce. Tavernier says : “ Broach is a great city to which there belongs a fortress, of which there is no use made at this time (circa 1676). But the city has been always very famous, by reason of the river, which has a particular quality to whiten their cottons. . . . In this place are made a great quantity of Baffas, or long and large pieces of cotton. These cottons are very fair and close woven ; and the price of these pieces is from four to one hundred rupees. . . . The English have a very fair house in

the city," and he then proceeds to give what is probably the first description of the mango trick.

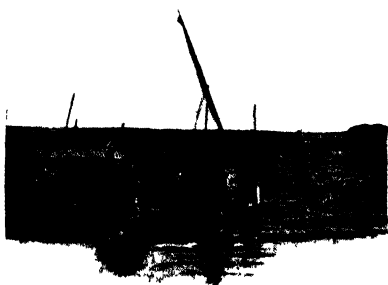
The walls are ascribed by local tradition to the twelfth century but a later date, 1526, is given by the writer of the *Mirat-i-Sikandri* who says they were built by the king of Ahmedabad. Uninteresting now when compared with other cities in Western



Cotton Picking, Broach.

and Central India, Broach has had a chequered history. Legend says that it was founded by a sage Bhragu and named after him. With the usual Indian indifference as to spelling the name became corrupted to Barugoza and so to its present form. Once it was held by the Emperor Humayun for two years, but for almost the whole of its history it was in the hands of Ahmedabad though it was twice, first in 1536 and again ten years later, plundered by the Portuguese.

In 1573 Broach was surrendered to Akbar by the last of the Ahmedabad kings, Muzaffar Shah III, but ten years later he recovered it for a few months. In 1660 Aurangzeb ordered the walls to be broken down and in this state it was twice plundered by the Mahrattas which caused Aurangzeb to have the walls rebuilt. In 1772 the English, after an unsuccessful attempt in the previous year, captured the town. In 1783 it was handed over to Sindia, but in 1803 it was retaken by the British and has remained ours ever since. Eighteen hundred years ago Broach was one of the chief seats of the export trade of Western India. To-day its trade has gone, captured by the modern appliances of Bombay harbour, the walls, except as a defence against the river floods, have almost disappeared and Broach is a native city once more.



Landing Fish.

## CHAPTER IV.

### AHMEDABAD.



HE traveller in Western India must always be struck with Ahmedabad, for not only does it contain some of the most perfect specimens of Mahomedan architecture in India, but it is the first city after leaving Bombay which in any way approaches preconceived notions of temples and wonderful carvings. Here once more is the blending of East and West, the latter typified by the tall chimneys of the cotton mills, but, unlike Bombay, the modernised portion is lost in the labyrinth of the East which encircles it. The delight of Ahmedabad, however, lies in the fact that so many of its old buildings remain more or less perfect and, as the old builders used their creations as records recounting in long inscriptions the history which accounted for their work, it is possible through these buildings to learn much of the history of Gujarat. The breadth of the great plains of black

soil where cotton now grows so plentifully, the luxuriance of the growth and the consequent prosperity of the people became a bye-word in the more arid tracts of Rajputana and Central India, and the History of Ahmedabad, therefore, is not out of place. For centuries Gujarat was governed by powerful Hindu dynasties and in the eighth century, according to the great Tod, whose history of Rajasthan is the foundation of most that is interesting in the old Gazetteer published on Western India, Varma Raja founded the capital of Anahelavada which lies between fifty and sixty miles away to the north-east. Here wealth accumulated until in 997 A.D. Mahmud of Ghazni marched into India and eventually reached Gujarat. It is said that he was so delighted with the place he had conquered that he seriously considered founding his own kingdom there, but, accustomed to his rough life in the hills, he eventually returned home leaving Anahelavada another period of peace during which it gained the reputation of being the richest town in India. Then in the fourteenth century came another temporary invasion but it was not till a hundred

years later that Gujarat fell into the hands of the Emperor of Delhi to be ruled by Viceroys. These latter however increased in power till a separate kingdom was founded.



The second of these emperors, Ahmad Shah, decided to remove his capital from Anahelavada on the Saravasti river to where the more ancient city of Ashawal dominated a bend of the Saburmati. According to custom, having traced out the lines of the city walls, he called the city



Mandvi Street, Baroda.

after himself and proceeded to establish his court there in a manner which was ostentatious even for India. Ahmad Shah reigned from 1413 to 1443 and was succeeded by an able governor under whom the city increased considerably. It was during this period from about 1430 to 1490 that most of the great monuments

were erected, some of the material being brought from the marble quarries of Central India but much of it being stolen from the Hindu temples which, as was their custom, the Moslem conquerors proceeded to despoil. Add to this the fact that almost the whole of the Mahomedan



Sacred Bathing Tank.

buildings were built by Hindu labour and it is easy to understand that despite the energy of the conquering race much of the Hindu style of work crept in, making the strange mixture which to-day stands out in such contrast.

Once more the Portuguese were responsible for the decline of one of the great centres of Indian

culture and trade. In 1571, the year before Akbar captured the city, it had twelve wards within the walls and others outside, with silk and gold and silver thread work as its principal industries, worth about fifteen lakhs yearly.

Akbar found little difficulty in effecting his conquest. The nobles were incessantly fighting among themselves and there can be little doubt that one party gave the city to Akbar in hope of gaining favour and greater power. Ten years elapsed, however, before order was restored. Scarcely had Akbar returned home before the Mirzas, Shah Mirza, the grandson, and Ibrahim Hussain and Muhammad Hussain, the younger sons of Muhammad Sultan Mirza, descendants of Tamerlane, or Timur as he is frequently called, who had been treated with great distinction by both Akbar and Humayun, attacked the city with the help of some of the defeated nobles. The attempt was unsuccessful but another attack a year later was nearly successful, though it was not till 1583 that Muzaffar, the last of the Ahmedabad kings, recaptured the city and spoiled it of its wealth. His day of victory was short. Mirza Khan, one of Akbar's most enterprising nobles, led an Imperial army towards the end of January in 1584, and routed Muzaffar at Sarkhej, which, in memory of the victory, was turned into a garden—Fateh Bagh—one of the most delightful spots in Ahmedabad. From this time for more than a century Ahmedabad enjoyed almost uninterrupted peace.



At the close of the sixteenth century various records show that the city was large and remarkably healthy. The houses were well built and the streets broad, in fact the main street was capable of accommodating ten of the ox waggons of the day abreast. Among the buildings were over a thousand mosques. According to the *Ani-i-Akbari* (1580) there were three hundred and sixty *puras*

while the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* says

“such was once its populous state that it contained three hundred and eighty *puras*, each *pura* a considerable quarter, almost a city.” In another place he mentions twelve city wards and others outside and in his detailed account of the city he mentions by name one hundred and ten suburbs, of which nineteen were settled under Moghul rule. Terry, however, writing



Village "Pump."

in 1618 says, "without the wall there are no suburbs;" while Mandelslo (1638) says that the suburbs and dependent villages were nearly seven leagues in circumference. Probably something between the three is the truth.

Blochmann writes that in the early days of the seventeenth century Ahmedabad increased in size, its Governor, Syed Murtaza, Shaikh Farid-i-Bukhari, founding a new ward and building a mosque and tomb in honour of Wajih-ud-din, who died in 1580. Some years later (1613) a company of thirty-two Englishmen under Mr. Aldworth came to Ahmedabad. Early in the following year a house was hired and brokers and servants left to gather goods. On December 15th, 1617, Sir Thomas Roe, pressing in front of Jehangir's camp, came to the city. Three weeks later the Emperor came and in due time received presents from the Company and gave an audience to a party of English speculators who, under one Richard Steel, a man, according to Roe's diary, "high in his conceit and forgetful of respect," had come out to get contracts for lead pipes. Shortly after some Dutch merchants arrived and Roe, for fairly obvious reasons, described them as "a nation under the king of England not welcome in all parts." The little ruse defeated his own ends, for Roe was asked to introduce his "fellow subjects." Here follows in Roe's account another description of the town. The English "were much pleased with the town. It is a goodly city as large as London.

Outside are no suburbs; inside are broad well paved streets lined with trees so high and large that it seems like entering a wood : the buildings are beautiful, the houses of brick, many of them ridged and tiled. The Viceroy's house is large and stately, of excellent stone, well squared and put together. Its craftsmen are cunning weavers, carvers, painters, inlayers and gold and silver embroiderers. Its traders, Pagans, Musalmans and Christians, deal in indigo, cloth and drugs on so large a scale that in the busy season (*i.e.* November to April) almost every ten days a caravan of about two hundred wagons start for Cambay."



Nothing could be more unlike this than Jehangir's description written, it is thought, in 1618.

"What," he asks, "What beauty or excellence can the founder of the city have seen in this wretched land with its dust-laden air, its hot winds, its dry river-bed, its brackish nasty water and its thorn-covered suburbs?"

So much did he dislike the city that he practically

Temple Remains at Sidhpur, Baroda.

refused to attend to its government, and a coin struck in 1618 bears the inscription "In the thirteenth of the installation Nur Jahan, wife of the king Jahangir, son of the king Akbar, lady Governor of Ahmedabad."

That the city found favour with many has been seen and that there were others who found it less delightful is obvious from Jehangir's attitude, but there were, probably, few who hated it as cordially or as consistently. At first he called it the Dust city (*Gardabad*), then as his dislike grew greater he termed it successively Simoom town (*Samumistan*), Thorny town (*Zakumdar*) and then when plague broke out Sick town (*Bimaristan*) and finally, in utter disgust, Hell town (*Jahannamabad*).

Prince Khunam, who, in 1627, became the Emperor Shah Jehan, was made Viceroy of Ahmedabad in 1616 and did much to improve the place, amongst his chief works being the Shahi Bagh and royal baths in the Bhadar. Progress was continuous for nearly a hundred years and Thevenot wrote that it was "the greatest city in India, nothing inferior to Venice for rich silks and gold stuffs curiously wrought with birds and flowers."

The weaving of gold and silver cloth is still a flourishing industry of the place and passing behind one of the many mosques one comes to a narrow lane from which, by a narrower staircase, little

better than a ladder, is reached a small room packed with gold cloth worth a millionaire's ransom. But the general trade of Ahmedabad to-day is more prosaic than it was in the days of Shah Jehan for the stamp of the Marathas is left on the district. It was towards the close of Aurangzeb's reign, 1707 to be exact, that the Marathas marched on Gujarat. The first force was under the command of Balaji Vishvanath and they reached within five miles of the city only to be bought off with two lakhs of rupees. Then came riots between the two sects of Mahomedans, Sunnis and Shias. Three years later the Hindus and Mahomedans were at loggerheads. This was but the beginning of the trouble. Each year saw some fresh disorders and when the Marathas returned it was with the utmost difficulty that they were pushed back. Each side conquered in turn, the city was taken and retaken, pillaged, its wealth stolen by the Marathas and restolen by the Kolis and Kathis, who found a chance of profit between the two parties. So things went on for half a century till in 1753 the Marathas entered Ahmedabad, holding it for over twenty years, up to 1780, when the British force under



Wild Monkeys at Ahmedabad.

General Goddard, acting with Fateh Singh Gaikwar against the Poona (Maratha) Government, marched on the city. The description which has been given of the siege makes it rank high in the annals of British bravery.

“ Finding the city strongly garrisoned, seeing no sign of surrender and suffering some loss from the enemy’s fire, General Goddard opened a battery and by the evening of the second day (February 14th) had, near the Khan Jahan Gate in the south-west corner of the city wall, made a practicable breach. Two days passed waiting for an offer of surrender, but no offer came and on the morning of the fifteenth under command of Colonel Hartley, with a forlorn hope of Volunteers from the Bombay division, headed by Sergeant Fridge, the storming party rushed up the breach. The struggle was fierce, the garrison yielding only after three hundred of their number and one hundred and six of the assailants lay dead.”

The once wealthiest city of Western India had come into British hands but the glory had departed. Forbes in 1781 says: “ Near the city the way lay through acres of desolation. There were trees and fields but only ruins of houses and no signs of life except tigers, hyenas and jackals. The walls were broken down in many places. The broad streets were without trees or pavement and much of the city was bare or in ruin. The population is little over one hundred thousand souls. Except

some calico printing, brocade weaving, and lacquered work in gold and silver, there were few signs of trade or manufactures. All is solitude, poverty and desolation."

During the next few years there was some return to prosperity, but in 1790 a great famine set in and



An Up-country Fruit Market.

a few years later three-quarters of the city was deserted. The city was restored by the British to the Peshwa by the treaty of Salbai, but by the treaty of Poona in 1817 the Peshwa agreed to let Ahmedabad in perpetuity to the Gaikwar for a yearly rent of four and a half lakhs and also agreed that this revenue should be paid by the



The Gaikwar's Palace, Baroda.



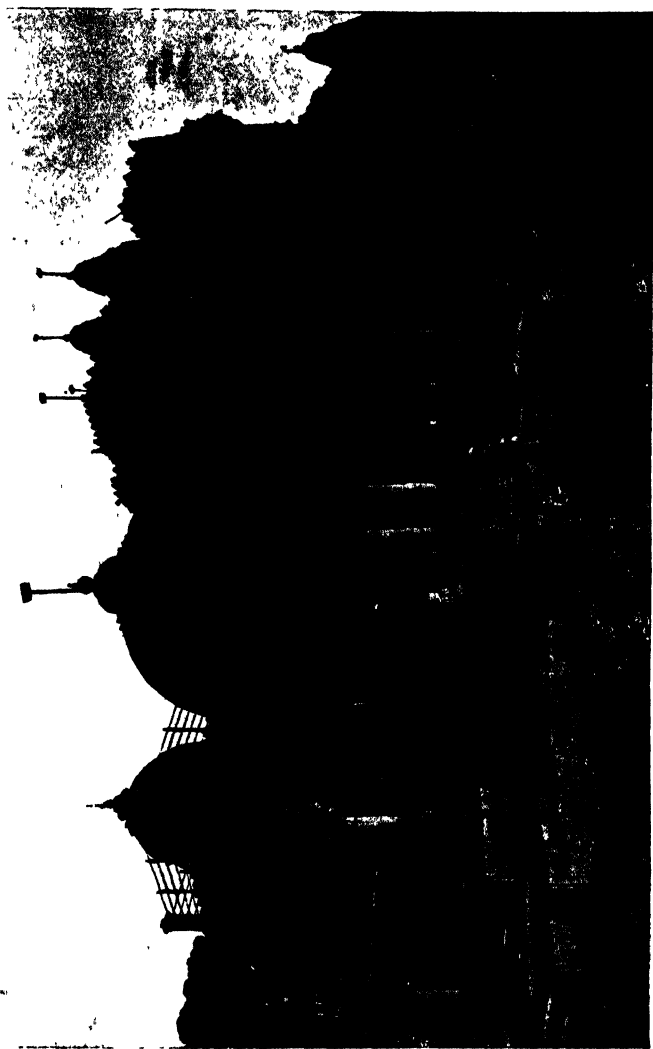
Gaikwar to the British as part of their claim. A few months later the Gaikwar ceded his rights to the British and in exchange for territory at Baroda surrendered his share in Ahmedabad.

The Gaikwar of Baroda is now one of the chief of the Indian princes ruling over a territory where progress is the watchword and education as keenly supported as in any part of the British territory. His State is economically and carefully administered. Roads and railways increase year by year. Irrigation, sanitation and education all claim a large part of the revenues of the State.

In 1817 a beginning was made to repair the walls of the city which had fallen from neglect and to-day they stand firmly encircling the city with a fort so arranged that military experts pray that it may always enjoy a peaceful existence.

Ahmedabad figures in few accounts of the mutiny of eighteen hundred and fifty-seven, but had it not been for the severe example made of the mutineers of the Gujarat Horse and the 2nd Grenadier Regiment, the city would in all probability have been plundered by the large population of low class Mahomedans who infested the place.

The visitor who wishes to see all the points of interest in Ahmedabad will do well to do his sight-seeing at leisure. The mosques, temples and odd ruins are bewildering in their number and though *Jahannamabad* was not a fair name for the city yet



**Hatthi Singh's Temple, Ahmedabad**

Gardabad is by no means a bad one, for the dust of Ahmedabad is everywhere. Leaving the railway station two lofty minarets stand out amidst the trees, but the mosque itself has practically disappeared. Some three-quarters of a mile away at Asarva is Mata Bhavani's well, with Bai Harir's well to the north. To-day it seems a neglected spot with weeds growing in the cracks of the stones, and the place, despite Government attention, is none too clean. Steep steps lead down from the ground level to square tanks some twenty feet below the surface and parapets lead on to an octagonal well which is the fountain of the whole scheme. From this, water was drawn up in skins to flow along a sloping channel to the tank where animals could drink, but its use for this purpose is gone and green weeds cover the surface of the water. Returning one comes once more to the city walls, but turning off from the station road the way leads on to one of the most elaborate of Ahmedabad's treasures. Standing a few yards outside the wall is Hathi Singh's Temple. There is no difficulty in seeing that it is a Jain temple on account of the quaint fluted domes with which its terraces are crowned. Seth Hathi Singh was son-in-law of Seth Hemabhai Vakhatchand and his monument dates from the later date of 1848 when it was completed after he had spent nearly a million rupees. The three buildings occupy a large rectangular space standing near the road. The temple itself is surrounded by *bhamti* or cloisters, each with the orthodox number of fifty-two

small shrines while the fine two-storied temple, containing the chief god, stands in the centre surrounded with a low roof supported by elaborately carved pillars. Buried almost in darkness is the shrine with the central figure of Dharmathana, the fifteenth Jina, to whom the temple is dedicated. Hindu work is essentially effeminate. The tracery of their carving suggests the insertions of lace on a woman's dress and it is a relief after seeing much Hindu work to turn to the sedate grandeur of Mahomedan architecture, though rarely can one find Mahomedan buildings which are free from Hindu influences. This is easy to understand. The Hindus were the old inhabitants, settled in some degree and able to make permanent buildings and to develop not only a peculiar style but a class engaged solely on such work. The Mahomedans, as invaders, the fighting race which swept over India, could but use the workmen they found on the spot to carry out their work, so while the front and Western walls of the mosques are pure Mahomedan, the roofs and pillars, minor parts from the religious point of view, bear carving in which animate forms, regardless of the Mahomedan law, figure largely. This is to be found even in the Jumma Musjid or Friday mosque. The entrance is mean, but when the dirty steps leading from the



dirtier road have been passed there stands out a magnificent specimen of the central feature of every city which carries the history of a Mahomedan occupation. To the West towards Mecca, the holy city, stands the actual mosque and in front of it stretches the enormous stone courtyard in which gather sometimes as many as ten thousand, when on Friday the priest calls from the minaret. In a large city the call to prayer is a marvellous thing. *Allah-ill-illah-Allah* calls the High Priest and on all sides the cry is taken up, called again and again, drawled with the slight wavering of the voice which carries so far and on every side in wider and wider circles the ~~cry~~ goes forth.

During a tour I made in the places which are described in these pages, I met a lady travelling through India, who said that she never visited "temples," because it was wicked to encourage the heathen. This is not the place, and I have no desire to discuss in any way the ethics of the various creeds which are accepted in India, but there are few who visit Mahomedan mosques who will not disagree with this lady and acknowledge that a religion which, like Mahomedanism, can inspire such devotion and strict observance is worthy of all respect.

The Jumma Musjid was finished in 1424 by Sultan Ahmad. On a slab above the centre of the three prayer niches he placed his tablet of dedication in Arabic.

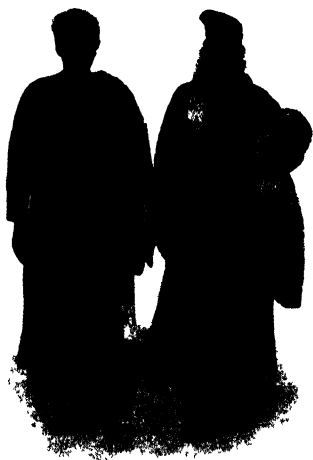


**Muhafiz Khan Mosque, Ahmedabad.**

"This high and far-stretching mosque was raised by the slave who trusts, comes again, and seeks the mercy of God, who is kind, who alone is to be worshipped, as the Koran says 'truly mosques belong to God, worship no one else but Him,' by the slave who trusts the helping God, Nasir-ud-dunya Wad-din Abul Fath Ahmad Shah, son of Muhammad Shah, son of Muzaffar, the King. The date of its building from the flight of the Prophet, God's blessing on him, is the first day of Safar, may the month end successfully and victoriously, in the year 827 " (*i.e.*, 4th January 1424).

On the walls of the cloisters, which stretch out three hundred and eighty-two feet in one direction and two hundred and thirty-eight in the other, are written in bold black letters sentences from the Koran. Opposite the entrance gate is another gate so purely Hindu, that it was probably a temple included in the walls. In the centre of the

courtyard is the tank where the Faithful bathe before they go west to prayer.



From the east end of the courtyard the mosque stands up with its five domes rising from the outer two, so that the centre one stands out high above the rest. Open

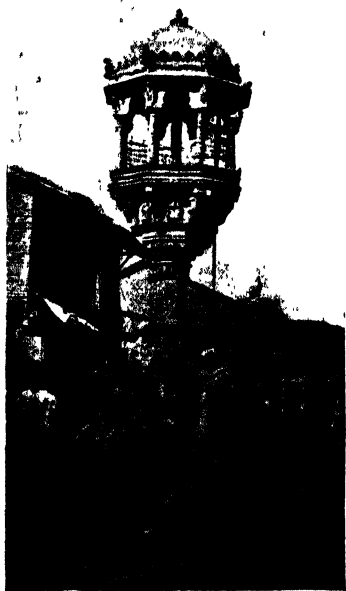
arches admit to the mosque, with wings on either side beyond the towers which are all that remain of the famous shaking minarets. Here again one meets the Hindu tomb. Lying in the marble floor is a large black slab said to be the back of a figure of Parasnath, the twenty-third Jain saint, and taken most probably from the temple in the eastern wall, now the gate leading to the tomb of Sultan Ahmad I, a massive building carved and domed, lighted with marble windows carved into lace work. Near by is another building containing the tombs of favourite wives, one of black marble covering Murki Bibi, an especial favourite, whilst beside are tiny tombs covering a dog, a cat and a parrot.

Not far away, a building long used as a bank, is the old Dutch Factory. The way leads on to the *Tin Darwaza* or three gates, a handsomely carved stone building. Beyond is the gaol, a building which was once Azam Khan's Palace and has come to its present use after many vicissitudes. Within the Bhadar which was a square of about forty-three acres is the mosque of Sultan Ahmad. The roughness of the outside has led antiquarians to believe that it was one of the earliest attempts of Hindu workmen to build in Mahomedan style. Pure Hindu pillars support the five large carved domes, and on the right is the latticed Princess's Gallery. West of the mosque is the Manek Buraj, said to be built round the foundation stone of the city, and far away, in the north-east corner of the



Bhadar, is a small mosque worth visiting on account of the wonderful tree carving of its western windows, work which was destroyed by the Marathas but has been repaired with infinite pains and skill. Near by are other mosques, some with little schools attached where tiny children squat in front of the pundit, reciting the Koran from volumes written in gigantic letters, no smaller than the capital letters of a child's picture book. The children look up as the *Sahib* approaches, and the teacher smiles and salaams but the monotonous chant never ceases. Of many other old buildings in

the neighbourhood, not far from Swami Narayan's temple, are the remains of Jehangir's mint.



On the way back some quarter of a mile from Hathi Sing's temple, on the cantonment road, are five tombs and Hazra Musa Suhag's mosque. It is said to have been built by Musa about 1460. Musa was a fakir and the legend of the tombs is that once, in answer to his prayers,

Sacred Pigeon House.

rain came and a famine was averted. As a result all the people flocked to see him, and to escape their attention he dressed as a woman. Having acquired a reputation for being able to bring rain, the king went to him to stop rain which was threatening to flood the district. Again his prayers were successful, but fearing the attention of the too gratified crowd, he also prayed that he might be swallowed up by the earth. This also was granted him, but the king tried to dig him out. Immediately his head appeared in another place, and when the king ordered the digging to be transferred to that place, the head appeared in still another place. So it happened four times, and the king determined to give up the digging and to offer flowers. Immediately the head appeared outside the mosque and forbade the offering. The five tombs mark the places where the head appeared.

Another spot which will repay a visit is the Shahi Bagh built by Shah Jehan, in 1622, to give work to the city during a time of famine, a proceeding adopted by the Government to-day and regarded by many as one of the advantages of the civilization which the British have brought into India. Forbes in 1781 gives a description of the palace as it then was: "The saloon is spacious and lofty as the building; the walls are covered with a white stucco, polished like the finest marble, and the ceiling is painted in small compartments with much taste. The angular recesses lead to eight

small octagon rooms, four below and as many above with separate stairs to each. The flat roof commands a wide view; the rooms under the saloon and a surrounding platform ornamented with small canals and fountains form a cool retreat." Tradition has it that Shah Jehan had a double purpose in ordering the work, and it is doubtful whether the chief motive was to give work to the poor or to please his wife Arjumadabad Bano Begam, better known as Mumtaz Mahal, after whom the district was named Begampur.

But the pearl of Ahmedabad is Rani Sipri's tomb. It was completed in 1431, probably during her lifetime, a common custom. Sipri was the wife of Ahmed Shah, and her mausoleum is well worthy of a king's wife. Throughout it is a perfect specimen of Hindu architecture. No arch is employed either constructively or for the sake of ornament, and the small minarets are merely ornamental towers devoid of stairs and galleries. Its position is unfortunate, for it juts out cornerwise to the

road, and a proper perspective is obtainable only from one spot: but what is missed in this direction is more than made up in the delicacy of the carving and the exquisite



proportions. The buildings of Ahmedabad are sufficient to, and do, fill many volumes, but for the visitor, those that have been named with others, of lesser interest, passed in the course of a drive will prove more than sufficient if enough time be taken to allow of full appreciation of their beauty or their memories. There remains, however, one spot which combines delicacy and grandeur in a marvellous fashion.

The site comprises a group of buildings, a tomb, a mosque, an assembly hall and an outer mausoleum with the tombs of lesser known persons. Shah Alam was son of Kutb-ul-Alam, who was looked upon as one of the most saintly teachers of Ahmedabad. The entrance is through a fine gateway, leading on to a second gateway which gives on to the main courtyard. Near the second gate, on the left, is the assembly hall of Sultan Muzaffar III, but it is not in its original state. Considerable dispute arose among different Government officials as to the "desirability" of preserving these buildings, and some of the stones of the audience hall were used by the British in 1780 to furnish materials for the siege of the city.



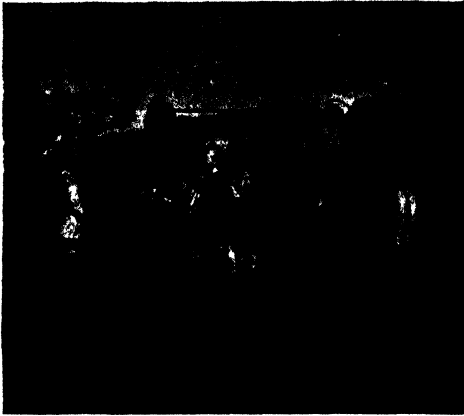
Where Circular Saws are unknown.

On the right the courtyard spreads out to the mosque, and the whole of the raised platform covers an enormous tank. Almost in front of the entrance gate is the tomb of Shah Alam, the most ancient of the buildings, dating from about 1475, and supposed to have been built by Taj Khan Nariali. The tomb is well worthy of the saint's memory. Exquisite carving in marble and pierced brass forms a lattice work wall around the tomb itself, while the same design is followed in the outer wall. In 1618, Asaf Khan was in Ahmedabad with the Emperor Jehangir, and he ornamented the dome with gold and precious stones. In the larger mausoleum the central tomb is that of Sayyid Mahomed Maqbul Alum, remarkable for the stone which surmounts it, bearing, deeply impressed, the foot-print of the Prophet.

On the anniversary of his death (the 12th of Rabi-ul-awal) this foot-print brings thousands of the Faithful to worship at the mosque, but generally a great calm pervades the place. A few goats nibble at the grass which has displaced the paving in some places, a pariah dog basks in the sun, and a native lies comfortably, sleeping throughout the heat of the day on a charpoy. But the restfulness of the place would have been pleasing to the saint. A Mahomedan tomb is generally a pleasant place in which to rest and meditate.

There remains to be mentioned Azam Khan's tomb at Sarkhej, the village to which Shaikh

Ahmad Khattu Ganj Bakhsh, who is called the "Lamp" of the Salsalah-i-Maghubiyah or Maghriti (Western) sect, retired and died in 1445. In the same year Muhammad II commenced a tomb in his honor, it being finished in 1451 by his



Drawing Water, Ahmedabad.

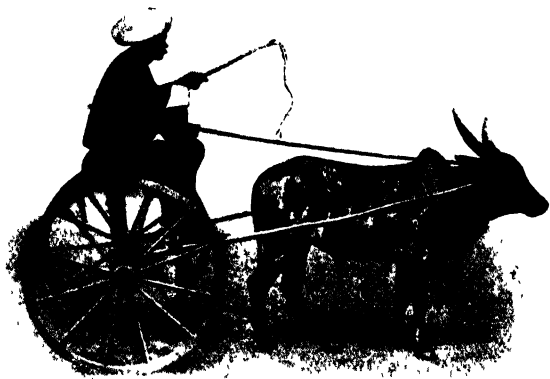
son Sultan Kutb-ud-din. Over the door is the inscription :

"When the ocean of Ahmad's palm scatters pearls,  
 Hope's hem becomes the treasure of Parwiz.  
 No wonder, if in order to bend before his shrine,  
 The whole surface of the earth raises his head."

Later Sarkhej became a favourite spot with Mahmud Begada and he dug the large lake with its terraced sides. On the south-west corner are the ruins of his once splendid palace and, near by the saint's tomb, his mausoleum.

As one enters at the eastern gate the first building is the tomb of the Shaik, a beautiful structure with its sides filled with stone trellis work and a cut metal screen round the tomb. Across the courtyard are two mausoleums connecting with a porch, containing the tombs of Mahmud Begada and his son, with the tomb of his queen on the west. Beyond is the cloistered enclosure with the mosque at the western end, a squat building outside but well proportioned within.

Outside the lake is sinking from the walls which surround it, for many years of bad seasons have failed to keep it full. Over all is the stamp of desolation and the only sign of life is a group of grey monkeys which nimbly slip round a corner as you approach. In the seventeenth century Sarkhej was so famous for its indigo that in 1620 the Dutch established a factory there. To-day it is practically deserted.



**Trotting Bullock.**

## CHAPTER V.

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### NATIVE STATES.

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THE journey to Ahmedabad is taken in trains which are only distinguishable from English trains by the fact that the designers and constructors, knowing what the heat of an Indian summer can be, have included several more contrivances for travellers' comfort. In England a night in a train, otherwise than in a special sleeping compartment fitted with beds, is a night of purgatory in the shape of balancing on an inconveniently narrow shelf with an uncommonly hard Hades below. The Indian train does much better. Each carriage is constructed with due consideration for the fact that during the time any particular carriage is in use as many people will spend their nights as days in it. The rack "for light articles only" is not the *summum bonum* as in an English carriage, but an accessory on which to put one's topee or hand camera: as one has to sleep in the train the seats are made to accommodate the traveller; and, as one undresses, one takes one's



bedding with one and one's baggage and, possibly, a miniature kitchen as well, packed in an incredibly small space. The latter, however, is not in the impedimenta of the ordinary traveller, for the Indian railway manager is human in many respects and stops the train for half an hour at stated places so that meals can be taken, if not in luxury, at least in comfort.

From Bombay to Ahmedabad the journey, except for the extra comforts, might be in England. Beyond the latter city, however, a new railway line commences. In place of the broad carriages to which one is accustomed is a train which looks somewhat of a toy when compared to the leviathan which stands at the other side of the platform. The B. B. & C. I. Railway, which means the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway, is an amalgamation of several lines. First of all there is the Bombay-Baroda line which runs direct to Viramgam, branching off at Baroda to Ujjain. Then, from Ahmedabad the narrow-gauge, in its turn the amalgamation of several railways with others branching off and bearing their separate names, which is now one and stretches to Delhi and branches off at Bandikui to Agra. The reason that it was not one continuous railway



A Complete Shave.

at the outset is simply explained. It is not necessary to go back to the "retired" list of Anglo-Indians to find those who know from practical experience of the objection of the native prince to the advent of the iron road. As a matter of fact the new comer, no later than a year ago (1906), had the opportunity of seeing much discussion in the Indian papers as to the objection of the Rao of Cutch to approving the construction of a very necessary railway over one alignment, which everyone considered essential for success, instead of over another to which there were many objections. His Highness found fault with the railway on the ground that it would injuriously affect his Customs returns. No better instance can be given than this of the difficulty with which early railway construction in India was faced. That the empire is now netted with lines, whilst more, to link up the present big systems, are contemplated every year, is the result of the persistency of Government in pressing its views. It must be remembered that though our occupation of India seems one of assured peace it has not always been so, and he would be a bold man who would hold that the policy of railway extension of to-day and the equally important policy of securing all lines as Government railways is not connected with the necessity of having every facility

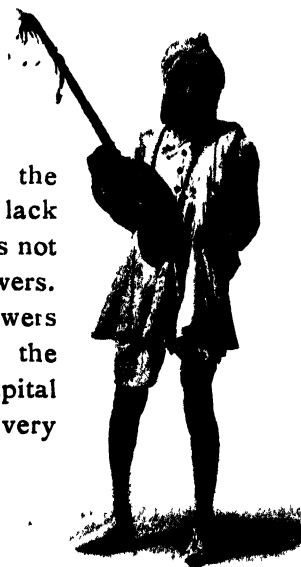


An Indian Railway Station.

for the most rapid transport of troops and supplies, should they ever be needed, either in India itself or on the grim North-West Frontier. The line from Ahmedabad to Delhi is, as has been said, the result of many enterprises joined in one. Baroda has already been mentioned as one of the Native States of India, but it is not to be compared with the great tract of Rajputana which lies on either side of the railway as one travels on to the North-East.

The train leaves Ahmedabad on its long journey amid country as fertile as that which surrounds Surat. Within a short distance is Mehsana where stands, close to the railway, an enormous pile of red brick. Passing it in a train in England one would immediately take it to be a large school or, possibly, a lunatic asylum. A closer look shows that it has distinctive features, and the opinion might change to class it as a country-house in rather weak imitation of the designs of Inigo Jones. Actually it is the administrative offices of the State of Baroda. Beyond this the hills which are sporadic continuations of the Western Ghats, running East and West instead of North and South, widen out. A hundred miles away, even less, the country has become flat and sparsely cultivated. A glance at the map shows that not far away on the North is the great Indian desert or, as the vernacular has it, "the land of death."

Roughly speaking, Rajputana covers between four and five hundred thousand square miles. The story of the rise of the Rajputs who gave their name to the land has been given in earlier pages and needs no repetition, but since the way lies for many miles through this tract of Native States, it will be as well to understand exactly what is the nature of a Native State. Including Hyderabad, Mysore, Travancore and Kashmir, the Native States of India cover an area of six hundred and seventy-nine thousand square miles, and contain a population of about sixty-two millions five hundred thousand. There are altogether more than six hundred of them, but many are so small as to be little more than a fairly large English estate. With two exceptions, no Native State has any real independence, and these, Hyderabad and Nepal, both of which are on different footings, do not come within the scope of this volume. The lack of independence, however, does not mean that the rulers have no powers. On the contrary, they have powers ranging from little more than the right to collect their rents to capital powers, though this last is very rare indeed on account of the fact that the advance of socialism in the West has in no way affected the idea of



A Native Musician.

the divine right of kings in the East. To those who intend to travel in India for a short period no better advice can be given than to read Sir John Strachey's book "*India, its Administration and Progress.*" For the benefit of those who have not read this book, and because no better description could be given, I quote from what he writes therein on this subject:—

"The term 'Native States' is apt to convey the idea that they are Indian nationalities existing in the midst of our great foreign dominion. This, indeed, is the popular English belief. It is assumed that in our conquest of India we imposed our rule on peoples who had previously been governed by princes of their own race, that we took the place of ancient native dynasties which we destroyed, and that having kept for ourselves the more valuable provinces, we have, for one reason or another, allowed some portions of India to retain their native governments. No supposition could be more contrary to fact. When, after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, the Moghul Empire was breaking up, a scramble ensued for the fragments, and this lasted through the greater part of the eighteenth, and the earlier part of the nineteenth, century. The chief competitors during the struggle were the Marathas, the Mahomedan powers of Southern India, and the English. The larger share fell to the English, but the other competitors had no better titles than our own. All alike were foreigners in the countries for which they were contending."

Sir John then goes on to quote from Sir Alfred Lyall's *Asiatic Studies*, and, for reasons which will be obvious to those who are acquainted with India

and the recent attitude of two governments towards it, I will include this extract :—

“ One of the popular notions in England and Europe regarding the establishment of the English Empire in India is that our conquests absorbed nationalities, displaced long seated dynasties, and levelled ancient nobilities. These are some of the self-accusations by which the average home-keeping Englishman justifies to himself the indulgence of sitting down and casting dust on his head whenever he looks back upon the exploits of his countrymen in India—an attitude which is observed by foreigners with suspicion or impatience according to their insight into English character. Yet it would be easy to prove that one important reason why the English so rapidly conquered India was this that the countries which fell into our hands had no nationalities, no long-seated ruling dynasties or ancient aristocracies, that they had, in fact, no solid or permanent organisation of the kind, but were, politically, treasure-trove, at the disposal of the first who, having found, could keep. The best proof that in these countries the English destroyed no organised political institutions is the historical fact that in the countries which they annexed none such had been left for them to destroy. On the other hand, where indigenous political institutions of long standing still exist, it is the English who have saved them from destruction.”



The Potter

Native States may be roughly divided into three classes, the Mahomedan, Rajput and Maratha, and it should be noted that with few exceptions none are older than our own rule, for their Chiefs rule as a result of conquests concurrent with ours. In many respects the Native States are on the same plane as Ireland. The difference is that while Ireland has parliamentary representation and can raise its voice in the legislature of "the foreign



A Fakir.

nation," the inhabitant of a Native State cannot do so because there is no such representation, for the simple reason that the prevailing ignorance makes it impossible. To show how foreign is the ruler to the ruled one may look at Hyderabad. The population is almost entirely Hindu, yet the Nizam is a Mahomedan, a member of another race and practically all his high officials are Mahomedans. The difference between the two races is so great that in comparison Alsace-Lorraine is in an ideal position.

The Hindu States are equally governed by foreigners, for Gwalior, Indore and Baroda under existing dynasties are modern institutions dating only from the middle of the eighteenth century. These three "Maratha" States have a population of about six millions, and yet there are no Maratha except the rulers and followers. But for the intervention of the British, Rajputana would now be a series of Maratha States. Writing of Gwalior, Scindia, its head, Sir Alfred Lyall says, is "the representative of the single family of a successful captain of armies who annexed in the last century all the territory he could lay his hands on, and whose son finally encamped so long in one place that his camp grew into his capital some sixty years ago. . . . He is a despot of the ordinary Asiatic species, ruling absolutely the lands which his ancestor seized by the power of a mercenary army."

The real Rajput States, however, are different. Here ancient forms of government have been preserved, and the Chief represents chieftdom which has descended in one family for generations, sometimes for one thousand years. Many States are termed feudatory, but the term is misleading and has come into use, as Sir Charles Aitchison says, "merely from want of a better or more convenient term to denote the subordina-



Bangle-walla.



tion of territorial sovereignties to a common superior, combined with the obligation to discharge certain duties and render certain services to that superior."

How these services have been rendered is seen in the history of the Mutiny, when, in Lord Canning's words, they served as a breakwater to the



Bundi City, Rajputana.

storm which would otherwise have swept over us in one great wave. Almost without exception these "feudatory" States remained true to us in that hour of trouble. In 1877 Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India. The beneficial effect on the country has been inconceivable. Were British supremacy in India removed, five years would see a return to the old conditions, and in less than five years more anarchy would

probably hold the land. How far we have improved the condition of the Government of India can be seen from the words of General Sleeman in his report on Oudh :—

“ The King did not pretend to concern himself with any public business. His ambition was limited to that of being reputed the best drum-beater, dancer and poet of the day. Sometimes he might be seen going in procession through the streets of Lucknow, beating the drum tied to his neck. Singers, fiddlers, poets, eunuchs and women were his only associates. The Prime Minister, a consummate knave, after keeping an enormous share for himself and his creatures, distributed the revenue and patronage of the country. The fiddlers controlled the administration of civil justice ; that of criminal justice was made over to the eunuchs ; each of the king's favourites had authority over some court or office through which he might make a fortune for himself. The minister kept the land revenue, every office was sold, commands in the army were put up to auction every season, or oftener, and the purchase money was divided among the minister, the singers, the fiddlers and the eunuchs. The minister was as inaccessible as the king himself. Petitions and reports were usually made over by him, if he gave any orders at all, to the commander-in-chief, who was an infant, to the king's chamberlain, a footman or coachman, chief fiddler, eunuch, barber, or any person uppermost in his thoughts at the time.”

To-day if you give your servant a rupee to pay to another native he draws his commission *simply because he has handled the money*. When questioned on the subject, if he gives any explanation

at all it will be that it is *dustoor* (custom). It is in the blood; it has been in the blood for centuries from the highest to the lowest.



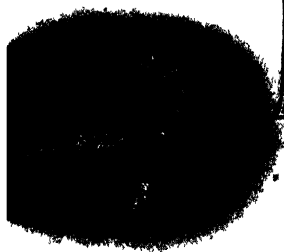
A Desert Water Carrier.

## CHAPTER VI.

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### IN RAJPUTANA—FROM ABU TO AJMER.

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**I**T is advisable that some definite conception of the meaning of the term "Native States" and our relation towards them should be held, and having given it for the benefit of those to whom the subject is new,

a start may be made into the land of Native States.

The first stop of special interest, after leaving Ahmedabad, is at Abu Road. In itself Abu Road, the small tract surrounding the railway station, has little or nothing to offer. It is from here, however, that the journey is made to Mount Abu, the finest sanatorium or hill station in central Western India. The journey is seventeen miles and is a revelation to those unaccustomed to travelling in India. There is but one form of conveyance—a two-horse tonga. Judging by appearances the tonga would seem to have been devised solely with the idea of combining the maximum chances of discomfort with the minimum of utility. In practice a tonga is by no means uncomfortable, and making

allowance for the fact that it is not slung on the best springs, the journey along the five miles of flat and the remaining twelve which run up the side of a mountain is distinctly enjoyable. Later I shall describe other modes of travelling less to be commended, but here there is provision for the *sahib*, and that is all that claims attention.

A few hundred yards from the station the road runs over an Irish bridge, which, fortunately, is usually dry. A mile further has been erected a magnificent bridge over the enormous river-bed, in the centre of which trickles a tiny rivulet, the Banas. Beyond lie the Aravalli Hills, masses of dense forest, from which, during the monsoon, the rain pours off, making the Banas and the Loni raging torrents. The first four miles are taken at a hand gallop. Then the rat-like ponies are changed and the long ascent commences. From a gentle slope up the side of a spur of the hill the road leads on to steeper climbs. South of Bombay there are many similar roads to be found up the Ghats; here this is the solitary instance and a veritable paradise after the monotony of the plain below. It is said that it is a long lane that has no turning. It is equally a long lane that is all turnings. Scarcely a hundred yards in ten miles has the slightest preten-



Up-country Travelling.

tions to be straight. The side of the hill, beneath the mass of green which completely covers it, is rough, rugged and steep. The road does not run along the side of this hill ; it has been cut out of it and the upper side in many places shows the mark of the crowbar which made the pockets for the dynamite which blasted out the track. If the journey be taken shortly after the monsoon there will probably be gaps where the torrent from the almost perpendicular slope above has washed away half the road. Then the Public Works Department steps in and builds up the gap which yawns into space. A new road has been constructed half-way up the hill, making the journey slightly longer, but it avoids a climb up the side of a cliff which is only passable because the road has been cut in a zig-zag so steep that the inside wall of one road is the outside wall of the road above it, mounting in this way by over a dozen turns for more than a mile. To the right as the ascent is made, when within a mile of Mount Abu, the view is into a valley, a perfect V with incredibly steep sides each over five thousand feet in height.



Bhisti or Water Carrier.

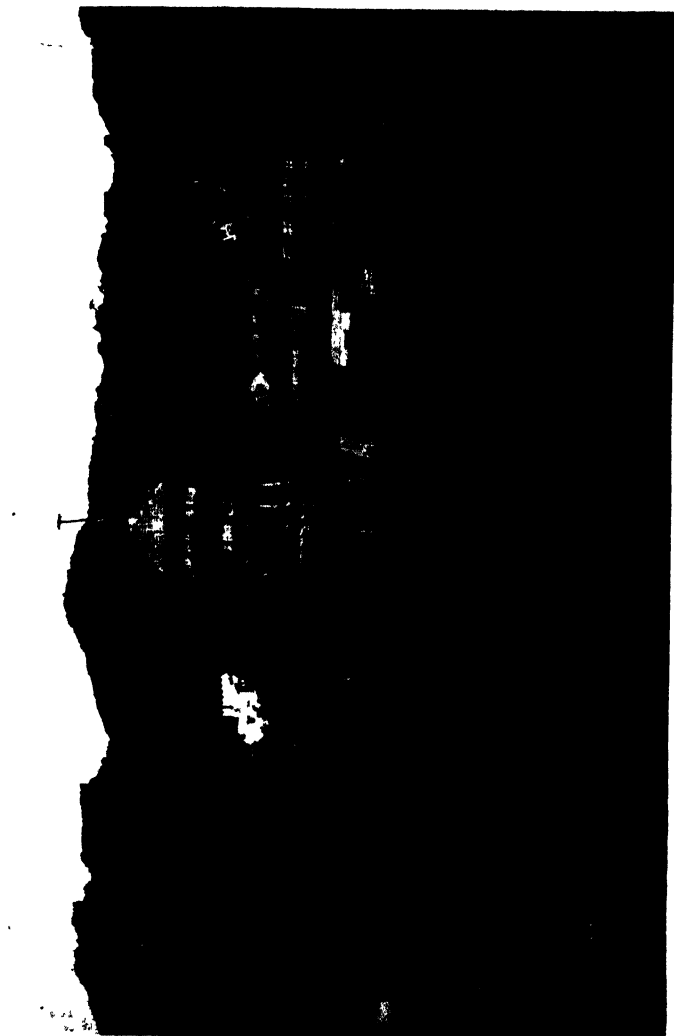
One could hardly choose a tract of land over which it is less desirable to rule. One-half is a sandy soil which parches up within a few weeks of the monsoon leaving water as valuable as champagne. The other half is dense forest of a kind that is very little use, unless one happens to be



A Good Day's Bag.

fond of shooting, a trait of the present Rao who keeps his State as strictly preserved as a Scotch grouse moor.

Mount Abu itself is somewhat of a curiosity. Used as a sanatorium for British soldiers and the summer residence of the Political *burra sahib* of Rajputana, the Agent to the Governor-General, it

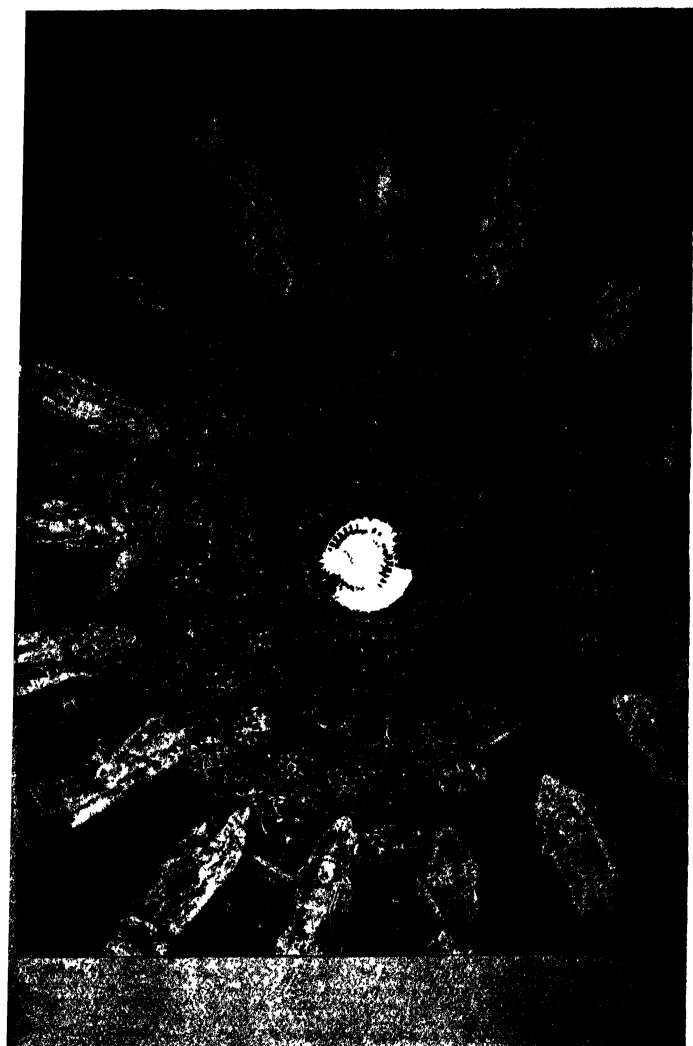


The Dilwara Temple, Mount Abu.



is not British territory. A yearly rent is paid for the station and to all intents and purposes it is under British rule. Yet if any serious alterations are contemplated by the British officials they must be sanctioned by the Rao and if the Rao desires to make changes British permission has to be obtained. The hill-station is, in fact, rented to a Power more powerful than the landlord, and fortunately disagreements rarely, if ever, arise. The military force of Sirohi consists of two guns, one-hundred and eight cavalry and five-hundred foot soldiers, so that a serious disagreement would be a very one-sided affair, the more so, when it is considered that the chief use of the guns is to fire salutes and of the soldiers to form a guard-of-honour.

I have said that the climb to Mount Abu is along the side of the Aravalli Range. Strictly it is so, but actually the mount is a huge, precipitous granite island. The settlement itself is a revelation of beauty. The roads which wander over the rugged summit are so steep that carriage traffic is forbidden after a certain point, and the common mode of conveyance for those who are not riding is the rickshaw. The residence of the *deus ex machina* of Rajputana is somewhat disappointing, but in front of it stretches the great lake which is the gem of the place. This is the largest sheet of water in the State, perched, in real Indian topsy-turvy fashion, on the top of a mountain while the plains below are arid. For the artist, or the person who needs rest, Mount



Abu is ideal ; for the curiosity hunter there is little. About a mile from the hotel is the chief spot of interest, the Dilwara or *Devalwara* temples. There are five temples in all and they are generally regarded as the most beautiful Jain work in India. The largest has three stories and is dedicated to Rishabhanath, the first of the Tirthankars, men whom the Jains have deified and now worship. Inside the main hall of this is a gold covered marble image, or four-sided figure called a *chaumukh*. Outside this is the portico supported by sixteen columns on each side. To the north is Bencasah's temple, while to the south-east is the temple of Adisvara, another name for Rishabhanath, and Gorakhalanchan. To the west of the central *chaumukh* are the two finest temples of all dedicated to Adinatha (still another name for Rishabhanath) and opposite it the temple of Vastupala and Tejahpala. The date of the former is traced in an inscription which has been translated to read "Samvat 1088 (*i.e.*, A. D. 1031) by the blessing of Amba, Vimalasah built the temple of Adinatha : this plate records its repair in Samvat 1379 (A.D. 1322) on Monday, the ninth day of the light, fortnight of Jaistha."

Ferguson in 1876 wrote : " Were twenty persons asked which of these two temples were the most beautiful, a large majority would, I think, give their vote in favour of the more modern one, which is rich and exuberant in ornament to an extent not easily conceived by one not familiar with

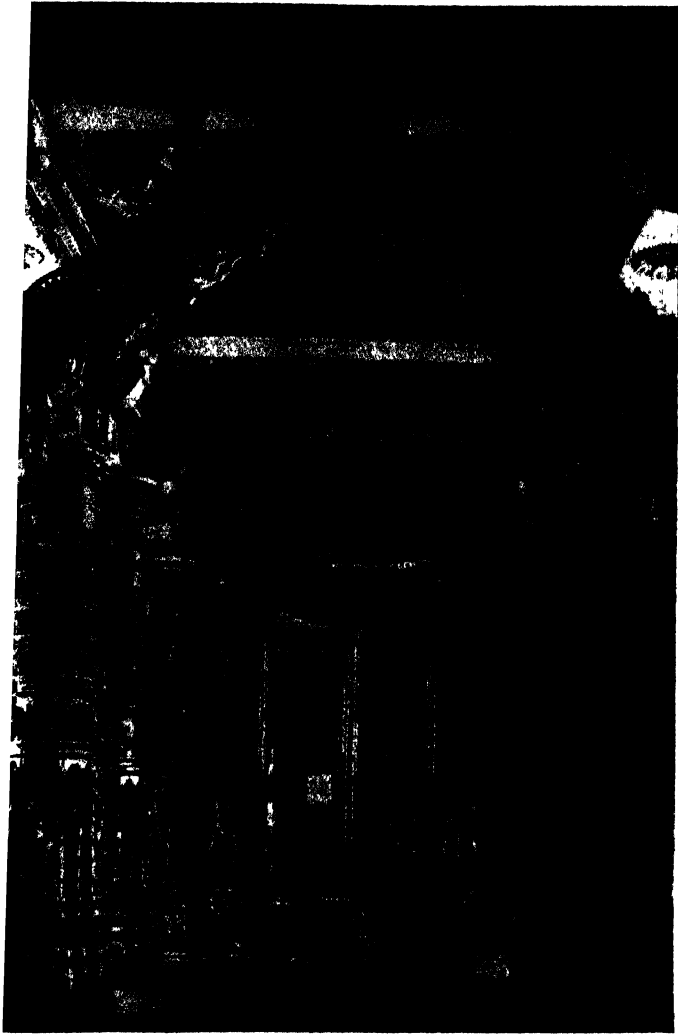
the usual forms of Hindu architecture. The difference between the two is much the same that exists between the choir of Westminster Abbey and the Henry VII. chapel that stands behind it."

Surrounding this temple of Vimalasah is a large courtyard with cloisters in the sides of which are fifty-five cells, the most interesting of which are the two in the south-west corner, in one of which is the figure of Ambaji, a familiar goddess always associated with Neminath, while Neminath himself, a huge black god, is in the next cell.

Externally the temple is plain and the porch is so meagre as to give a feeling of disappointment. But a few yards lead to a sight which is unequalled. Internally there is scarcely a square inch that is not the work of the carver. Constructed of white marble, which has turned yellow from age in places, the pillars, the roofs, the walls stand out as delicate in their tracery as the walls of a honeycomb. Not content with the usual surface carvings which are to be found throughout India, here each part stands out a separate item of one perfect whole. Most people have seen specimens of Chinese ivory carving and wondered how the balls within balls have been carved. There is nothing that can be so well compared with this Chinese work as this courtyard stretching out one hundred and fifty feet by ninety. There is no word which expresses the feelings as the sight first bursts upon one through the opened door.

As one grows more accustomed to the effect it is possible to pay attention to the detail. The nine elephants have been despoiled of some of their original beauty when they represented the procession of the merchant Vimalasah and his family to the temple. It is related that once, in England, a Bishop unveiled a tablet which, through the fault of the mason in omitting four words, read : "To the glory of God and of" with the usual details which follow. There is often something in Hindu temple construction which recalls this to the mind.

Hindu art, too, often strikes the Western mind as bizarre, and the figures to be seen here are hardly of the nature that one expects to find in a religious place elsewhere than in the East. But the workmanship is such that criticism of the conception is impossible. "The temple of Vastupala is separated from the court by a pierced screen of open tracery, the only one of that age—a little rude and heavy, it must be confessed, but still a fine work of its kind. Behind it are ten elephants of very exquisite workmanship and with rich trappings sculptured with the most exquisite precision. The 'Mogra Raja' has carried off the riders but in this case the loss is not so great, as behind each elephant is a niche containing statues in alto-relievo of those who were, or were to be, mounted on them. There are Vastupala, with his one wife ; Tejapala with two ; and their uncle, who seems to have been blind, with



Interior of the Dilwara Temple, Abu.

three—in short, the whole family party. The men are fine-looking fellows, all with long, flowing beards; the ladies are generally sharp-visaged, sour looking dames. " Very true in historical fact, but sadly inadequate as a description of one of the finest combinations of carvings which India holds.

Next in beauty to the Dilwara temple, though of a perfectly different nature, is the lake which nestles between hills on three sides. Here four thousand feet above sea-level lies the Nakhi Talao or Nail Lake, so called because it is supposed to have been dug out at one scoop by a man's nail. Around the edge of the water runs a winding path, shady in places and at others bare to the merciless sun, but the air is cool, and when the rickshaw and its coolies are left out of sight it might well be Cumberland Derwentwater, only Cumberland improved by the luxuriant foliage which covers India everywhere where there is water to support it. To the north and south of the lake the hill rises steeply, and on the face of the latter side can be seen black spots, the homes of cave dwellers. On the opposite side of the water the hill is more rugged, but for the energetic a path runs up the topmost point whence one can look down on the scattered bungalows and the lake blinking half in shadow half in a glare of light, or away over the unbroken plain to where another range of hills rises blue on the horizon.



Lake view. Abu



In the opposite direction, towards Dilwara, lies a low range, with another larger range of hills close behind it. Here on the south-eastern hill is the ancient site of Chandravati, but to-day little remains. The Mahomedan Sultans of Ahmedabad, the Thakurs of Girwar, even the Rao of Sirohi himself have allowed the marbles of the old temples to be taken away to be built into new houses, to be burned for lime. As a site of interest it should be visited, but it is a painful visit, for the glory of the past has left only a ghost to tell of its existence.

From the hill the long descent is made to the railway in the plain below. Once more the pace is a hand gallop ; the tonga lurches from side to side, corners are taken with a sudden jerk leaving but inches to spare, first between the wheel and the rock, again between the wheel and the low wall which guards a drop of a thousand feet. Yet accidents are almost unknown. It was on this downward journey that I saw my first Bhil looking for his supper. As a matter of fact there were two, one carrying an old gun, the other a bow and a dozen arrows. By those who know him the Bhil is appreciated as one of the finest of sportsmen in the world. There is another view which I quote with acknowledgments to a humourist whose name is unknown.

“A young Bhil chieftain had heard of the fame of a wonderful archer named Drona of the Royal house of Kanouj. He journeyed all the way to

Hastinapur and begged to be taught the use of a bow and arrows. Now the Bhils dwelt in the southern hills; they were faithful to their word, but addicted to robbing villages, though not yet instructed in the use of the bow. Drona refused to teach the young chief, saying it would be a sin to teach a Bhil the use of the bow. So he returned to his country in sorrow, but he made an image of



Where Railways are yet unknown.

Drona and did homage to it and shot arrows before it until he became an archer.” But for the best description of a Bhil one must turn to another description quoted in the same place. “A Bengali student being asked to describe a Bhil in some examination gave the original reply :—‘The Bhil is a black man, but more hairy; he first shoots you through the body with an arrow and then

throws you into a ditch ; by this you may know the Bhil.' ”

Essentially the Bhil is a robber and he is not above carrying out the awful deeds described by the Babu, but once he becomes your friend you have a friend for life. As shikaries Bhils are unrivalled in India and many an Englishman who has shot since childhood would like to be as certain with his rifle as the Bhil is with his bow.

“ I shot an arrow in the air  
It fell to earth I know not where.”

That is not the Bhil's method. If his shot miscarries he hits a rock and breaks his arrow. So he learns to hit and hits nearly every time.

There is little doubt that the Bhils were the ruling race in Western India before the advent of the Rajputs, and though the variety of types shows there must have been from time to time admixture of Rajput blood, yet they remain apart, a despised race, intensely suspicious of civilisation. In almost every habit the Bhil is distinct from the Hindu. Instead of living in villages, gatherings of rude mud huts, he lives in a house set apart perched on some rising spot and surrounded with a stout fence.

An exceedingly interesting paper by Captain Barnes was read on the subject of the Bhils before the Society of Arts, and he has collected probably more information than has ever been available before.

One of their characteristics is their capacity for amusement. They are always ready to dance, and a crowd of two to three hundred engaged in this is a not uncommon sight. Broken up into groups they perform to the music of drum and cymbal, singing the while either traditional songs or others of a semi-religious type. Fond as they are of such exhausting exercise as dancing, they are strongly averse to manual labour. This was



A Group of Rajputana Dancing Girls

shown in the great famine of 1899-1900, when, though practically robbed by the failing monsoon of their usual mines of wealth, the mohwa, mango, chironji, *temrua-linis*, all trees fairly plentiful in the forest, rather than take part in relief works, they sold their jewellery, their household utensils, anything rather than work, and when everything

saleable had gone, took to the war path to live on loot, wandering off into the forest, too often to die of starvation. Two years later, when signs of famine again appeared, they had learned their lesson, and first a few, then many, came to the relief works for help.

In religion the Bhils are animistic and have a tendency to worship with a view to propitiate anything they do not understand, such as the manifestation of great power or an object of unusual



A Stiff Problem.

shape or form. But this does not cover all, and their reverence for certain trees, which form the chief source of their food and wealth, shows a sense of utility. Then too animal worship, chiefly of the totem of the tribe, is common, and their adoption of the Hindu gods, Kali, Ganesh, the elephant, and Hanuman, the monkey god, are probably on this account, for the Brahmin counts as nothing to the Bhil.

Of their customs Captain Barnes has given some accounts which compare notably with those

of early civilised Europe. The first ceremony of a marriage, for instance, is the offering of a libation to the goddess Earth to ensure her blessing on the union, that it may be fruitful and fortunate. Child marriage is unusual and a matter which distinguishes the Bhils from the Hindus in this respect is that the wife brings no dowry. So too the re-marriage of widows, usually to a brother-in-law, is common. Usually the bridegroom's family sends a present to the bride's parent wherewith to buy her a trousseau and to prepare a feast, but in cases of poverty the bridegroom will sometimes go to the bride's house, working there for years. No money is paid, but the pair live as man and wife from the commencement.

The actual marriage ceremony is of the most quaint description. Feasts have been given and no work is done for several days. Each day the bridegroom sends an arrow tipped with *haldi* or turmeric to the bride, who is also being feasted. Invitations to the wedding consist of leaving a handful of rice on the guest's door-step. On the appointed day the bridegroom receives his guests, who each place a present in the dish which stands in front of him.

The journey is then made to fetch the bride. On arrival at the



house he touches the garland over the door with his sword, costing him a tax of four annas to the village policeman. Then, on entering, he is met by the bride's brother who steps upon his foot and now eight annas has to be paid. Then the bride appears. She is dressed in white with the edge of the garment stained yellow. Her *sari* is then tied to the groom's *pagri* and the two sit facing the east, the bride on the left. A bundle consisting of a little yellow dyed rice, one pice, and a betel-nut is put in her hands, a cloth is thrown over them, and the man takes it from her, using one hand only. Then comes the essential part of the ceremony. A peg is driven into the ground, and around this they circle seven times from right to left, the bridegroom leading four times and the bride three. After this comes a still stranger function. In the village refuse-heap has been buried a small basket containing betel, rice and a pice. They are led to the spot and told to find it. The female relations of the successful one then commence to abuse the female relatives of the other, and this has become quite a formidable ceremony, for the little offences of everyday life become magnified a hundred times. Then the *Tarvi*, a headman of the bride's village, stands up and says: "This girl has now been given to you. If her character is bad, you must inform me. If any of you kill her by sword, or arrow, or stick, her family will take the revenge of blood. If she die a natural death, there will be no claim against you." Then a procession

is formed, and the party sets out for the bridegroom's house when the refuse-heap ceremony is re-performed. Three days later the bride returns to her parents for a few days and then leaves their house for good.

"Each stage of the marriage ceremony," says Captain Barnes, "is marked by special songs, sung by the women of the family, with the assistance of



Cloth-Workers.

the minstrels (*dholis*) specially engaged. A collection I have made shows that they are usually vulgar, if not obscene, the main point being the abuse of the female relatives of the bride or bridegroom as the case may be."

Less curious but still characteristic are the lengthy funeral ceremonies.

Up to 1827 the Bhils had been so turbulent that it seemed only possible to adopt a policy of



extermination. Then Outram was appointed by Elphinstone, the then Governor, to attempt pacification. With a beginning of nine Naiks he founded the Bhil Corps of Khandesh, and a finer set of fighters could be found with difficulty. Outram was given wide powers, and before many years the



Ruined Temple at Abu Road.

Bhils had become more or less accustomed to a regime of peace.

I stopped my first two Bhils to barter for the bow and arrows and eventually bought them for two rupees. Had there been time to argue they would probably have parted with them for half that amount, but there was a train at the other end



Ajmer Lake

calling for urgency, and it is hard to barter with a man whose language resembles Zulu with the clicks replaced by the gurglings of a puppy chewing soap.

The Bhils may be robbers, they may be amongst the least civilized of the aborigines of India, and yet perhaps they are not so bad as they would seem when compared with their neighbours. One of the faults of the Rajput is his exceeding extravagance in the matter of marriages and funerals. Often a family is ruined for generations through some desirable alliance having been contracted, and some twenty years ago was founded a society for the abolition of this waste. It is known as the *Walterkrit Rajputra Hit Karini Sabha* and by it are laid down rules which, according to income, limit the number of guests, presents and other items at the ceremonies in question. How necessary was some such decision can be gathered from one paragraph in the original rules which reads :—  
 “The amount of presents fixed should be accepted with thanks and distributed before witnesses. The recipients should not go to foreign territory nor should they (if disappointed) use abusive language.”

The Bhil is not so bad after all.

From Abu Road the journey goes, through country which gets more and more arid, to Ajmer. A deviation may be made from Marwar Junction to Jodhpur, the city of horses which has



given its name to the popular riding breeches, founded in the twelfth century by a son of the Maharaja of Kanauj. The city lies in the midst of the great sandy plain which stretches to the north into the Bikanir desert. Here may be seen numbers of a particular class, the Bhats, who, except for a slight attention to general trading, live on the profits which in this land of ancestry are certain to the expert in genealogy. The territory was conquered by Akbar in 1561 with the result that Udai Singh set out into the world and afterwards attained fame. Three miles to the North lies Mandir where are the tombs of the old Purihar Prince of Marwar. Continuing the journey after the return to Marwar, a State known throughout India because of the shrewdness of the Marwaris in business, especially money-lending, the next stop to be made is at Ajmer.

No city in Central India contains such contrasts as this. On the one hand are ancient buildings, on the other the great railway works of the Rajputana-Malwa Railway.

To most people, I think, the pearl of Ajmer



must be the Anasagar Lake. For this, praise is due to Lord Curzon. He found the bund in ruins; to-day it stands out a mass of gleaming mar-

Clock Tower, Ajmer.



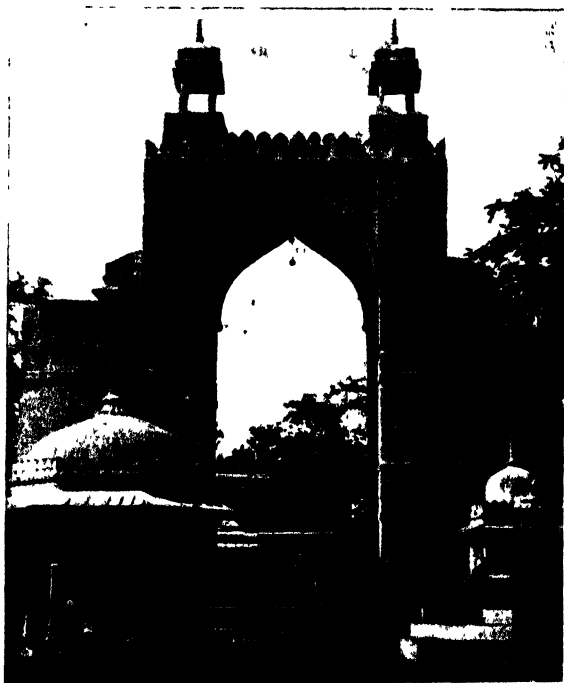
The Jhalra, a holy Tank near the Darga, Aimer.

ble, worthy of Shah Jehan who built it. After the dust of the city the water makes the spot an earthly paradise. The marble buildings please the eye by their perfect plainness; the background of dark-green, hides the barren plain behind; the unbroken line of the bund is the conception of a man who could rise above petty detail. It is a place to dream in, well called the Daulat Bagh, the Garden of Splendour.

In the city is the usual quaint mixture of hovels and magnificent buildings. One of the most interesting of these is the *Arhai-din-ka-Jhonpra*, so called because Altamash, finding the original Jain temple, converted it into a mosque in two and a half days or so, it is alleged, leaving as a result the finest specimen of early Mahomedan architecture now extant. In recent years much has been done to repair the havoc wrought by time and those who had little or no reverence for old monuments. Fortunately the tide of opinion has turned in time and the Government of India considers money well spent in such conservation, regrets in fact that so little may be legitimately set aside each year for the purpose.

The general plan of the Arhai is ample. A large roof is supported by a quadruple range of pillars. The roof is beautifully carved, rows of little domes between each set of four pillars flanking and fronting the central dome. Altogether there are between forty and fifty pillars and these are the marvels of Ajmer. Each bears a different design.

Probably each is the work of one man left to design with his chisel as he saw fit, for the custom of Jain builders was to describe the general plan and attend to it during construction, leaving, in a great degree, all the detail to the worker himself. Tod



Arhai-din-ka-Jhonpra Gateway, Ajmer.

dates the Hindu temple as two years before Christ, but on this opinions differ very considerably.

According to an inscription the great mosque was completed during the reign of Altamash, probably in 1200 A.D. Here is the earliest example



of a pair of Muezzin towers placed over the sides of the great arch. From here the view extends over the city, while behind stands up the precipitous hill, the "fortress of the goatherd" Aja Pal, who gave his name to the city. Aja Pal gained a grant of territory through supplying milk to a saint and commenced building, but the work he did in the day fell down at night, so he transferred the site of his fortress. The tower and walls still remain but the palaces are mere ruins.

Close by is the Durga, another of those quiet spots, where reverential calm surrounds a dead saint. This is an object of veneration to Mahomedans and Hindus alike. It is the tomb of Khwaja-ud-din-Chishti, who came to Ajmer in 1235. Soon he had made many converts, and stories are still told of the miracles he performed. The group of buildings has much that is of interest. Close to the entrance stand two huge cauldrons called *degs*. Every year is held a festival when these are filled with a mixture of rice, spices and *ghi* or clarified butter. Usually the material is an offering by some rich Mahomedan, who bears the whole cost, £100 for the larger and £20 for the smaller. On the appointed day fires are lit under the *degs*. A special family holds the hereditary right of selling the mixture to the crowd which collects and becomes so densely packed that movement is well nigh impossible. The festival took place a few days before I reached Ajmer, but I was fortunate in meeting an Englishman who had contrived to witness the

ceremony. He is unlikely to repeat it. Perched on a point of vantage, the better to see what happened, he found it impossible to get away. The stench was intolerable, the howling of the mob deafening. Wrapped up to the ears in cloths six inches thick, the officiating family commenced to scoop out the boiling mass. Occasionally one would be overcome with the heat and the smell, to be carried away and laid out to recover. Boys swarmed round him scraping the greasy mess from his clothes and eating the sacred offering, all the sweeter, perhaps, in that it was stolen. On and on went the ceremony. Those who could manage it gorged on the mess till compelled to lie down somewhere to sleep off the effects of their beastiality. It is a sight to be avoided.

Passing through another gate it becomes incomprehensible that such an orgy should be possible here, even in the outer courtyard. Here stands the tomb of Khwaja with beautifully trellised walls and massive silver doors. Near it is a partially ruined mosque built by Akbar and another built of marble by Shah Jehan, still perfect both as to its stonework and its silver mountings, a sacred shrine viewed by Europeans, only



Ajmer Club.

through silver doors specially opened and speedily closed.

On the other side of the town lies a large white building with a tall minaret. Clustered round it in the large park are other buildings, all of handsome design. This is the Eton of India, called Mayo College. The idea was first mooted in 1870 by Lord Mayo at the Ajmer Darbar, the proposal being that a college should be founded especially for the sons of Rajput Chiefs. Subscriptions were called for, and by Government doubling the amount assured, six lakhs were obtained, subsequently to be increased to nearly seven and three-quarter lakhs which form the endowment fund. The park of one hundred and sixty-seven acres was set out and the work commenced. The main building, visible for a long way in the surrounding country, was built by Major Mant, R. E., and opened by the Earl of Dufferin in 1885. This is the "big school" and the boarding-houses lie further out in the park beyond the various grounds for recreation. These boarding-houses are eleven in number, ten being for Hindus and one for Mahomedans.

In some cases a house is the gift of a State and is reserved for the use of princes of that State. Here are cricket pitches,



Entrance Gate, Mayo College, Ajmer.

tennis courts, a racquet court and gymnasium, swimming bath, and riding grounds, while stabling for one hundred and fifty horses is provided.

How excellent is the work done by this college can only be understood by comparing the boys' present condition with the life they would be forced to lead at the Courts of their States. The majority of the rulers of Native States are, in their way, progressive, shrewd gentlemen, but it is the result of their own powers of imitation and the fostering care of the Political Agents. Education, as it is understood in the West, is rare. The Mayo College is the training ground of the next generation of Chiefs, and through it India will have Chiefs who have benefitted by that training which a public school always gives. The boys escape the enervating atmosphere of the Court, and one can well imagine that the influence of the harem is not of the best, getting in its place the healthy life and competition of a school where they are still young princes but first and foremost school-boys. Mr. Waddington has reason to be proud of the institution under his care. The subjects taught include Sanskrit, the language of the holy writings, English, Hindi, Urdu, English and Indian History, Geography, Drawing, Mathematics, Law, Political Economy and Agriculture, while a new physics laboratory is in course of construction.

The visitor not knowing India might look upon these boys as living in the lap of luxury. Some of them do to a certain extent ; some have barely

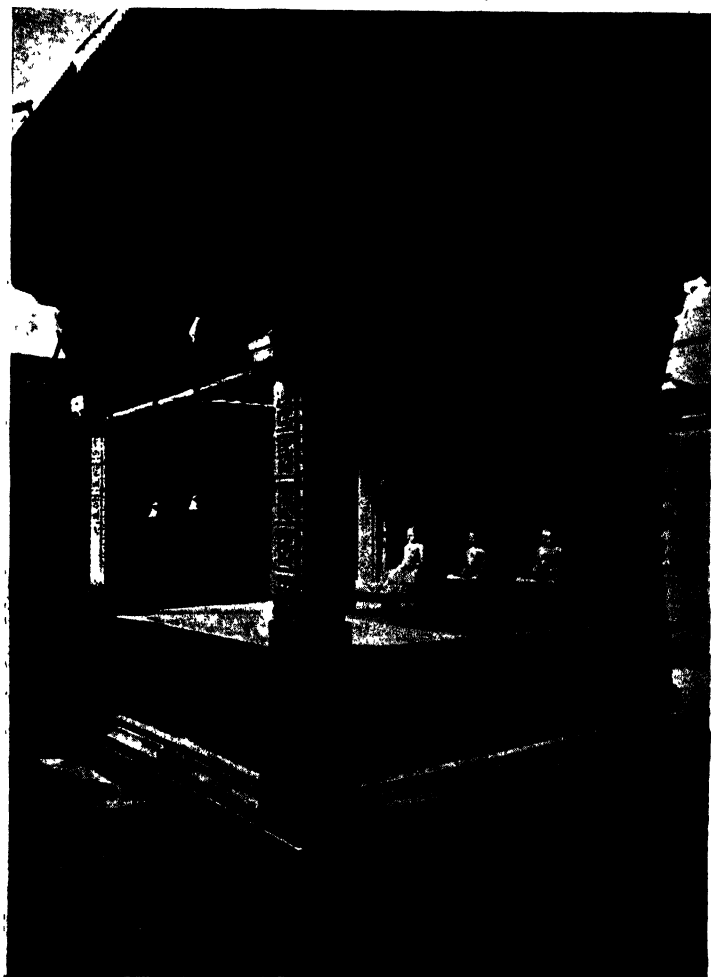
enough for the necessities of life ; many a young prince, though the lowest fees are only Rs. 40 and the highest Rs. 200, is unable to go to the college at all.

Before returning to the city a deviation can be made to a scene which is, in its way, one of the wonders of Central India. During the journey there has been ample opportunity of seeing the ryot, the peasant cultivator, who forms, as Lord Curzon loved to reiterate, eighty per cent. of the population of India. He tills his land with his oxen and a cumbrous wooden plough, gathering his harvest by the handful, a couple of centuries or more behind the agricultural methods of to-day. Here in Ajmer are the construction works of the Railway, and another aspect can be seen, the native trained up to do the work for which strikes have obtained such handsome wages for the British artisan. There is nothing out of date here. A compressed air hammer beats its devil's tattoo, sealing the joint of two boiler plates, machinery which is to be seen in only the largest engineering works in England is in the hands of a native who

turns out some part of a locomotive. Machinery to-day is almost human—not quite, though most human of all is it in its habit of



Mayo College, Ajmer.



Interior of Temple, Ajmer.

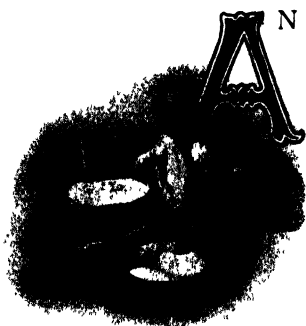
little faults. An Englishman has to do several years' training before he can be trusted to use many of these machines. Here are natives, men who would otherwise probably be coolies or ryots, doing the same work equally well. Only parts of the engines are imported, and these because India has not the demand to justify a factory which can only be run successfully on an enormous scale.

There is much else to be seen in Ajmer. There is the gaudy museum-like temple of Sait Mulchand Nemichand, a red stone building, which might be the toy room of a millionaire baby: there is the great hill behind the city from which to witness the plain, changing from the grey of early morning as it wakens into life.

Six miles away is Pushgarh, a sacred lake. Here Hindus come to bathe, but they are now complaining that they have been hoist on their own petard. When Ana Sagar lake began to dry up, the muggers were in danger of dying. Now the mugger is a sacred animal—nearly all things that are exceptionally ugly or exceptionally pretty are sacred, and following their rule of killing nothing, the Hindus roped the muggers on to bullock carts and deposited them in the lake at Pushgarh, where they have flourished so exceedingly that the pious Hindu who goes to bathe stands in imminent risk of leaving an arm or a leg in one of the two hundred hideous snouts which look upon him as a dainty morsel. As a pet the mugger is a failure, and the Hindus are now finding it out.

## CHAPTER VII.

### CHITOR AND UDAIPUR.



N early start from Ajmer brings one to Chitorgarh early in the afternoon. Slowly the parched plain has given place to more fertile land, and tanks eventually take the place of the small rugged stone hills which crop up at intervals along the first part of the journey. As far as passenger traffic is concerned, Chitorgarh exists but for two things, the visitor to the rock fortress which gives the district its name and the visitor to Udaipur some seventy miles away.

Few cities, with perhaps the exception of Delhi, can boast of such an eventful existence. The history is a long story of rival kings, of sacks, of wonderful heroism. As one approaches in the train, there rises an enormous fortress, which becomes more and more like a castle as it draws nearer. A devious route from the railway station, made probably on the State elephant which the official in



charge of the Fort places at the disposal of visitors, brings one to a fine old nine-arch bridge over the Gamera. A few yards further and a narrow gate is reached. Beyond lie narrow streets and tortuous turnings, leading on to yet another gate where the ascent of the rock begins. Those who have made the journey to Mount Abu are aware of the



State Elephants.

method of carrying a road up the face of an almost perpendicular rock. On the left, as the ascent is made, a wall rises some twenty feet to a parapet formed by its six feet of thickness, while on the outer edge rises another six feet wall, slotted for use of soldiers in the general fight for power. Chitor was the key to the whole tract of country which surrounds it. Looking at it to-day one would imagine it to be impregnable except with

the heaviest of modern artillery, yet its history reads otherwise. Besides the main road, with heavy gates placed at intervals and still kept under an armed guard, there are two other possible entrances to the fort, one called the Lakola, a small rugged pathway at the extreme north, and the other the Suraj Pol on the eastern face. Standing four hundred and fifty feet above the level of the plain the precipitous sides are covered with dense *dhao* jungle.

Of its history before 728 A.D. little or nothing is known. In that year, Bapa Rawal wrested it from the reigning chief, it being held for nearly eight and a half centuries when it was deserted after the storm and capture by Akbar.

In 1275 Lakumsi came to the throne and kept his court at Chitor, then one of the richest towns in India, when he was immediately attacked by Ala-ud-din. Twice the fort was attacked. The first time it escaped destruction, though most of the defenders perished.

The second attack made by Ala-ud-din was ostensibly to capture Pudmini, the wife of Bheemsi, uncle of Lakumsi, and his guardian; Pudmini was a title bestowed only on the fairest. A long siege availed nothing, and finding that he was unable to effect a capture, Ala-ud-din reduced his demands to a sight of the great beauty. This was granted, it being stipulated that he should only see her reflection in mirrors, a strange permission when all things

are considered. Relying on the good faith of the Rajputs, he entered the city with only a small guard, saw the fair Pudmini and returned. Equally relying on the faith of the besieger, Bheemsi accompanied his visitor to the gates. Here he was ambushed, carried off to Ala-ud-din's camp and held as ransom for the surrender of Pudmini. To save



A Good Bag of Duck.

the honour of the King she agreed to be taken as a prisoner to Delhi, but later counsels devised a plot.

Ala-ud-din was informed that on the day he evacuated his trenches Pudmini would be sent, but it was pointed out she would have to be accompanied, in a manner befitting her status, by her hand maidens—not only those who would follow

her to Delhi, but those who wished to come as a last mark of respect. Strict orders were issued that the sanctity of the *pardah* was not to be violated. Seven hundred covered litters proceeded to the royal camp. In each was placed one of the bravest of the defenders of Chitor, borne by six armed soldiers disguised as litter-porters. They reached the camp. The royal tents were enclosed with kanats, the litters were deposited, and half an hour was granted for a parting interview between the Hindu prince and his bride. They then placed their prince in a litter and returned with him, while a great number (the supposed damsels) remained to accompany the pair to Delhi. But Ala had no intention of permitting Bheemsi's return, and was becoming jealous of the long interview he enjoyed, when, instead of the prince and Pudmini, the devoted band issued from their litters. But Ala was too well guarded. Pursuit was ordered, while these covered the retreat they perished to a man. A fleet horse was in reserve for Bheemsi, on which he was placed, and in safety ascended the fort at whose outer gate the host of Ala was encountered. The choicest of the heroes of Chitor met the assault. With Girah and Badul at their head, animated by the noblest sentiments, the deliverance of their chief and the honour of their queen, they devoted themselves to destruction, and few were the survivors of this slaughter of the flower of Mewar.

Ala was defeated, and the siege was raised.

In 1290 or 1303—the date is given variously by different authorities—Ala-ud-din had recovered from his defeat and returned to the capture of Chitor. Little by little he gained the southern point, where the supposed remains of the trenches are still pointed out. What follows is, perhaps, the most wonderful story of self-sacrifice in the whole of history.

After a hard day amidst the defence the king was resting though unable to sleep—so goes the legend. Suddenly appeared before him the guardian goddess of Chitor. She warned him that she must have twelve royal victims as an offering, or “the land will pass from thy line.” The vision was reported to his council of chiefs but they refused to believe him. But they themselves saw the vision that night. “Though thousands of barbarians strew the earth,” she said, “what is that to me? On each day enthrone a prince. Let the *kirnia* (umbrella) and the *chamara* (tail of the wild ox on a gold handle used as a fly switch) proclaim his sovereignty and for three days let his decrees be supreme : on the fourth let him meet the foe and his fate. Then only may I remain.” The Greek and Latin poets give stories not far different.

No sooner had the decree been accepted than a discussion arose as to which of the brothers should have the honour of being the first victim. Ursi as the eldest secured his claim. Ajeysi, the

next eldest, urged the same claim, but he was his father's favourite son, and at his pleading allowed his brothers to precede him. Gradually all the brothers shared the fate until but Ajeysi remained.

Then the fair Pudmini called all the women to follow her. A funeral pyre was lighted in a



Drawing Toddy.

great subterranean retreat, and the great procession of several thousand walked to their sacrifice. For a moment Pudmini hesitated. Calling to her nephew she asked how her lord had fared in the strife before the end came. The lad replied: "He was the reaper of the harvest of the battle; I

followed his steps as the humble gleaner of his sword. On the grey bed of honour he spread a carpet of the slain ; a barbarian prince his pillow, he laid him down and sleeps surrounded by the foe."

"How did my love behave?" she asked once more.



A Sadhoo.

"O ! mother," replied the lad, "how further describe his deeds when he left no foe to dread or admire him."

She bade farewell to the boy, and with a smile said, "My lord will chide my delay."

A moment later Pudmini, the chief and the last of the women of Chitor, had thrown herself on the flames. The great Johar, which will ever live

as the theme of India's greatest heroism, was complete; the twelfth royal head had fulfilled the sacrifice. Yet Ala-ud-din marched into an empty city, where streets were covered with the brave dead. A little distance further he saw the smoke of the funeral pyre of her for whom he had been fighting.

To-day you can see the spot. The local guide will point out a small dark hole which he regards with reverence. But whether this is the spot no one knows. Since the great *Johar* the cavern has been closed, and superstition has placed a huge serpent, whose "venomous breath" darkens the light, as guardian of the cave.

And who after all would disturb it? After this sack Ajeysi escaped to Kailwarra in the heart of the Aravali mountains to be succeeded, at his father's wish, by the son of Ursi.

Much time elapses before the history of Chitor emerges once more from comparative mediocrity. Bagh-ji, prince of Deola, claimed what Ursi had claimed. He was crowned king that he might be sacrificed to the goddess. The son of Boondi and Deora Raos of Jhalore and Aboo had formed the most powerful force ever sent to subjugate the rock island of the plains. The besiegers gained their ground, and once more the great *Johar* was performed.

The infant Oodey Singh (or Udai Singh) was placed in the charge of Chuka Sen Dhoondera, by whom he was carried out of all danger.



Meanwhile, all the explosives that could be gathered together were heaped in a huge magazine. Kurnavati, mother of the prince, led the way, and in a flash thirteen thousand more victims lay to the charge of the "barbarian" invaders.

Then the gates were thrown open and the Deola chief led his men in a wild rush, which they knew to mean but one thing. Chitor was a city, not of



A Midday Halt.

the dead but of the dying. On all sides lay corpses and those from whom the last flicker of life was passing.

There are other tales of heroism at Chitor. Bunbeer, the "usurper," plotted to kill the six-year old boy, Udai Singh. One night when the lad was sleeping after his evening meal, suddenly the nurse heard screams coming from the female palace. Just then a servant came to take away the remains of dinner. The Rana, he said, had been killed. With a sudden fear she placed the sleeping

boy in a fruit basket and, covering him with leaves, gave it to the Bari beseeching him to carry it from the fort. Then she placed her own son in the empty cradle, and when Bunbeer entered saw him commit the murder which he had plotted in vain.

The secret was kept. Tod carries the story to its end. I will quote only of the flight.

“The faithful servant was awaiting the nurse in the bed of the river some miles west of Chitor and fortunately the infant had not awoke until he descended the city. They departed for Deola and sought refuge with Sing Rao, the successor of Bagh-ji, who fell for Chitor. Dreading the consequences of detection they proceeded to Dongerpur. Rawal Aiskarn then ruled this principality, which, as well as Deola, was only a branch, but the elder branch, of Chitor. With every wish to afford a shelter he pleaded the danger which threatened himself and the child in such a feeble sanctuary. Pursuing a circuitous route through Edur and the intricate valleys of the Aravalli, by the help and with the protection of its wild inmates, the Bhils, she gained Komulmeer.” Here the child was placed in the hands of Assa Sah, a Jain, by whom he was adopted for protection and for the sake of safety declared to be his nephew. Seven years passed before the secret was discovered, when the boy was placed in the charge of the Kotairo Chohan, the great wise elder of Rajasthan, or, as we call it to-day,

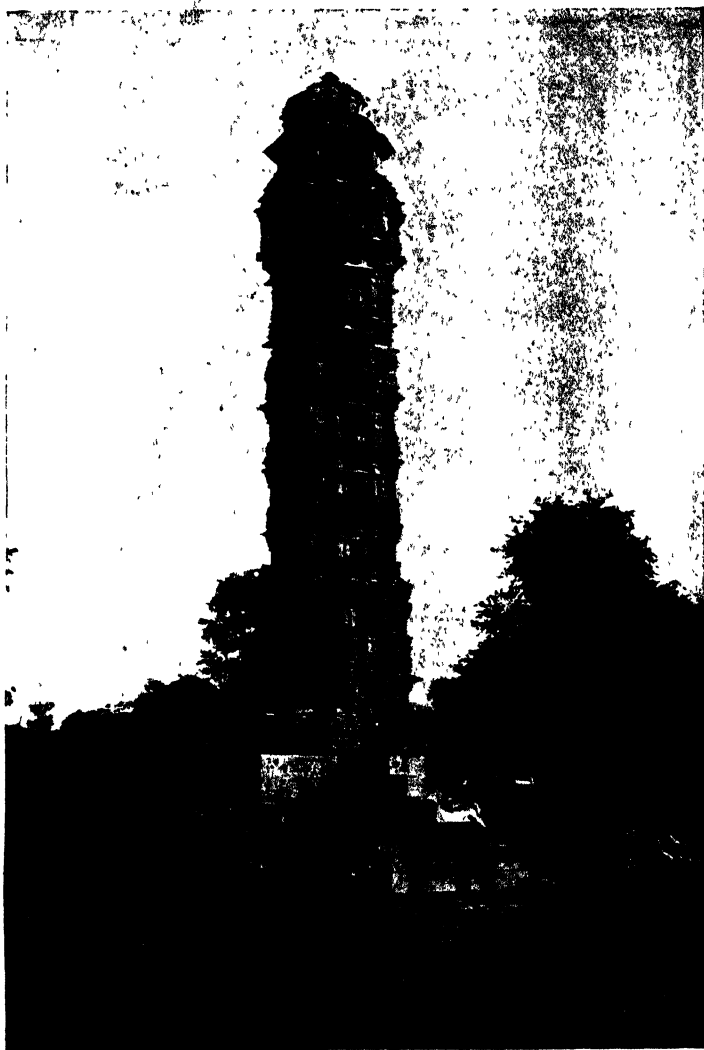
Rajputana. He had, it appears, known the secret throughout, but there being some doubt he "ate off the same platter with him" than which no more proof he could devise.

Such is the early history of the dynasty which descends through the thrilling history of Chitor and such is the history of the rock fortress itself. To-day it is deserted, its inhabitants being but a few priests who attend to the ancient temples and an equally small number of ryots. Chitor loses nothing through the awful quiet which envelops it. One cannot conceive a place with such a history still enveloped in all the bustle of the bazaar. Chitor remains a memory of the brave dead. The first point which catches the eye is the Khirat Khumb, or Tower of Victory, a handsome monument to which the balconies of its nine stories lend a great charm, while a close inspection shows that Rana Khumbhu spared no pains or money fitly to commemorate his victory over the

combined armies of Malwa and Guzerat in 1439. The column which was erected in 1450 is covered with a host of mythological subjects. But this is a young relic compared with the smaller pillar



Dural or Native Tailor



**Tower of Victory, Chitor.**

which lies some little distance behind it. According to Tod, through whom most of the history of Chitor has been handed down, this bears the date of A.D. 896, while one of the Jain inscription dates back to 755. Palaces, temples and huge reservoirs cover the surface of the rock, and the jackal and the peacock rule on the hill of blood which has become the hill of silence.

One leaves with the setting of the sun with a feeling that there have been others besides the British who have had the spirit of empire-building coursing through their veins. The elephant marches slowly and solemnly down into the night on to the plain where many armies have encamped.

My last view of Chitor was one that I shall never forget. The train left for Udaipur early in the morning and the first gleam of the sun awoke me to the bustle of the railway. Standing up in the background was the great rock. Above shot up the branching gleams of light which come before the dawn. The sky grew brighter and brighter ; suddenly the sun rose, the whole became a blaze of gold. Chitor was crowned with light, the only crown for such a history.

The land which lies on the way to Udaipur naturally differs from that which lies round Ajmer. Whereas the sandy soil round the latter makes cultivation difficult, Udaipur is favoured with plenty of tanks and lakes, and crops are everywhere. Until the last few miles the country is perfectly

flat. Then steep hills rise up like a barrier. The train winds in and out of valleys and one expects every turn to bring into view the city of lakes. Nothing of the kind. The Rana is by no means a railway enthusiast and the terminus stands a long way from the city itself. Perhaps it is as well. There is nothing in common between the bustle of the railway and the air of self-satisfied repose which pervades this city of palaces.

I have given something of the history of Chitor and the family which rules the State and it will



Falls at Darijhat near Mhow on the B. B. & C. I. Ry.

be well to continue the story briefly in its new aspect. Rana Udai Singh ascended the throne in 1541. Of his nature Tod has unkind things to say. "Woe to the land where a minor ruler or a woman bears sways," exclaims the last of the great bards of Rajasthan. "But when both were united, as in Mewar, the measure of her griefs was full. Udai Singh had not one quality of a sovereign. Wanting in martial virtue, the common heritage of his race, he was destitute of all." In the same year that Udai Singh was restored to the throne Akbar

was born, destined to regain the power which had been wrested from his father at the fall of Humayun. In one thing only were Udai Singh and Akbar similar. Both came to their own when under thirteen years of age. Udai Singh has left his name to live for ever in the beauty of the capital he founded. Akbar leaves the name of a man, a name which will never die.

The two first met when Akbar marched against Chitor. One attempt was unsuccessful. A second recalls the history of former assaults. In the hour of defeat the women committed *johar*. The Rajputs, fired by the example, rushed on to death, and the final sack and spoliation of Chitor followed. But the Rana was not there. He had escaped before the siege was in full swing. He found refuge in the forests of Rajpipli and thence passed on to the valley of Girivo, where he had, several years previously, formed the lake still known as Udai Sagor. Here he raised another barrier to dam a mountain stream and raised his palace called Nochoki. Around it grew the city to which he gave his own name—Udaipur. The

Ranas of Udaipur claim two great things—first that they are descendants of the sun ; secondly that they never gave a daughter to the



Washaway in the Monsoon.

Moghal emperors. The first is perpetuated in the city's name, for Udaipura means "The City of Sunrise."

Later the Moghals occupied Udaipur, but it was a hollow victory, and once more the State passed back into the House of Chitor.

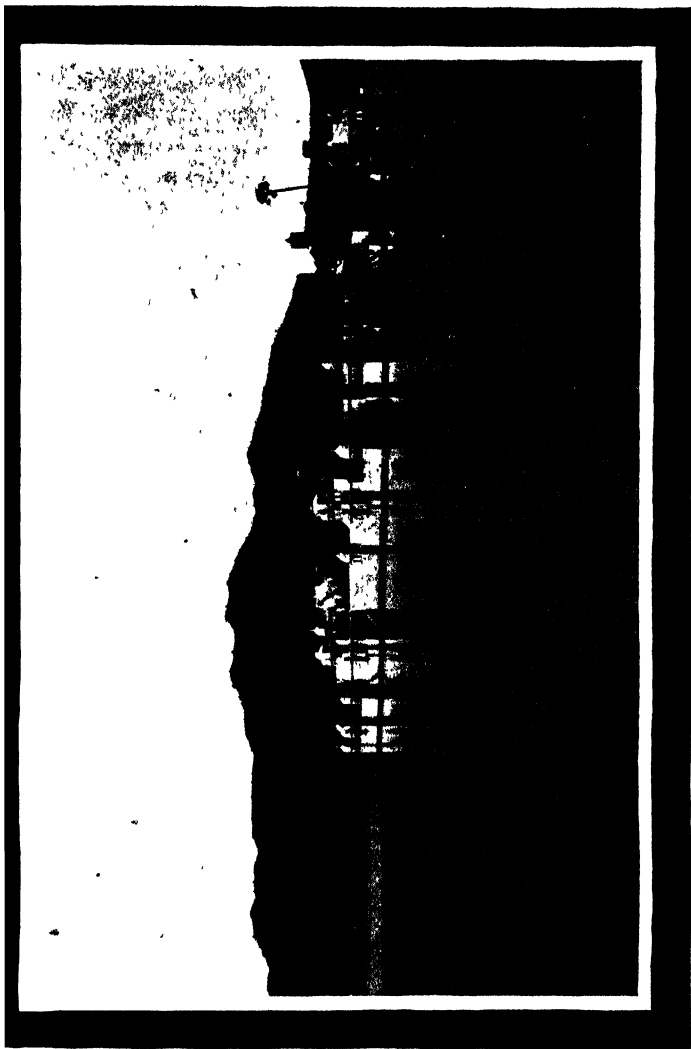
Then comes the rebellion of Kurum, who aspired to the throne of Jehangir in place of his brother Purvez. The latter was slain. Kurum resorted to arms, but was forced to flee, and he found refuge at Udaipur. An island in the midst of the lake was set apart for him ; a gorgeous palace was built, the walls decorated with precious stones, and a throne was carved for him, and here he remained until the death of Jehangir. Two special traces of his residence remain. The palace stands up from the water with its fringe of trees like a pearl set in jade. Within is the chapel erected to the Mahomedan saint Madar and, in the palace, visitors may see the record of the pledge of friendship. The Rana, visiting his guest on his island, swore that in no way should his sanctuary be violated. As a pledge they exchanged their *pagris*, and that of Shah Jehan is one of the most treasured relics of the city. From that time Udaipur flourished. Fresh palaces were built ; gardens were laid out. It was at Udaipur in the Badul Mahal that Kurum was first proclaimed Shah Jehan. Most that is beautiful in Udaipur dates from the reign of Juggut Singh, Shah Jehan's friend and protector. The palace on the lake,



called the Jug-ne-Was, was constructed entirely by him, while he did much to make the Jugmunder palace the beautiful spot it is. Nothing but marble was employed. The baths, fountains, columns are all marble, often inlaid with mosaic. Historical paintings covered the walls. It was, in truth, a palace for a king, the acme of splendour, the last word in delicacy, now somewhat ruined internally with cheap and tawdry fittings. Around stretches the lake rivalling the blue of the Mediterranean; fringing the lake are green trees, rising behind are forest-covered hills topped with rugged heights.

The whole of one side of the lake is a marble terrace broken ever and anon with some stately building, above all of which towers the gleaming palace. It is an imposing pile viewed either from the water's edge or from the island palaces, rising a hundred feet from the ground at a considerable elevation from the lake. Octagonal towers, crowned with cupolas, stand as guardians along its walls. Along the hills stand forts, but they wear a look of decay.

The beauty of Udaipur is no niggard thing. Drive along the lake in the early morning to the Khas Odi. A well laid road wanders through the trees which here stretch down to the waters' edge. Wild pigs—though not very wild—are grubbing in the undergrowth. Through the gaps in the trees one sees the early morning mist rising up. The sun is rising behind the hill. Turn to look



The Palace on the Lake, Udaipur.

across the lake to the great stretches of terraces and towers and cupolas. Here one is not troubled with the squalor which inevitably lies cheek by jowl with oriental splendour. One sees only the beauty conceived by generations of master architects. Then the sun tops the hill and veritably it is the City of Sunrise.

There is nothing to be said which can describe it better than those three words.

Lying behind the city is the second most delightful spot in Udaipur—the Garden of the Slave Girls. One is inclined to think that with such a garden as this there could be little desire to visit the outside world with its trouble and barrenness. Here tall trees shut out the sun leaving the delightful feeling of coolness that shade in India always gives, especially tree shade. The great white house in the centre of the inner garden is empty now and the gardens are given over to the *malis* who slowly work around its beds. But in the whisper of the trees one can imagine the garden filled once more with its gaily dressed throng. Here, under the shadow of the seraglio a princess leaned watching the gold fish in the fountain pond which is now a mass of water-lilies. What were the secrets whispered there? What were the hopes and fears as my Lord came? Was it to be a smile? Even the lowest of the handmaids might hope for that. Was it to be a frown? Even the highest might tremble.



Palace Triple Gate Udaipur.

A mile or so away is the Gulab Bagh, the Rose Garden, but in beauty it cannot compare with the walled-in paradise. There is a museum here containing many priceless curios, and there is a small zoo, but the whole place gives the impression that it is too big to be properly cared for.

Returning to the city one may, with special permission, visit the palace. There is the great temple of Jagernath and there is the bazaar thronged with buyers and sellers and hangers-on. The streets are narrower than anywhere mentioned before, except some of the side streets in Ahmedabad. Here the main thoroughfares accommodate a carriage with difficulty. On either side goes on the everlasting wrangle over the twelfth part of a penny. Everything is peaceful now, the city gates are wide open and there is no invader who may come bringing destruction with him. Yet these are the children of Chitor and each man carries his *tulwar*. It is all that is left to remind them that once, no matter whether they were cloth-sellers, or grain dealers, potters or grass-cutters, every man was a warrior.

The British have effected many reforms in India. Some are popular, some are accepted with indifference, some are regarded as madness. With infinite difficulty and great expenditure of money the British have, after many years' labour, succeeded in instilling into a few minds the fact that widow remarriage is not the awful thing which it is believed to be. Every year such a marriage takes place



**The Lake Udaipur**

and it is heralded— by the reformers—with joy. Whether it is worth all that is necessary to achieve so small a result is a matter which each settles for himself. To begin with, child-marriages are not such an evil as some wish to depict them. Child-marriages in Western Europe would be criminal because all other customs would be antagonistic to the idea. On the same principle polyandry is not considered respectable in Western Europe, but he would be a foolish man who casts imputations on the character of a Lêh lady because she follows the custom of her people.

To a certain extent it is sad for a child-widow that she cannot re-marry. The Indian would think it far more sad that a girl should live to, say, twenty and then take a vow never to marry. Some day when India has been cultivated up to the Western standard of civilization he may look at these things as we do. To-day he does not. The *purdah* is not only the result of a jealous husband locking his wife in her house. Just as often it is the result of the wife who shudders at the idea of walking abroad as Western women do. And so she, wishing to remain hidden for life, is only just grasping the idea that there can be some reason that has prompted the British to prevent her from throwing herself on to her dead husband's funeral pyre. Equally it is not quite clear why people should not offer themselves to Jagernath.

It takes away much of the poetry of the great *johars* of Chitor, but it must be confessed that this

spirit must have had much to do with them. Here the husbands were about to perish. *Sati* must follow, and the only difference was that they allowed their husbands to go into their last battle knowing that their loved ones would never be made the slaves, or worse, of the barbarians.

That there is still grief that *Sati* has been forbidden is proved by the following which appeared recently in a Bengali "Babu" paper, that is, one printed in English :—

" There are many pure and chaste women to be found in Nepaul who would burn themselves on the funeral pyre of their husbands. Near the vicinity of the Himalayas an old Brahmin was leading a pious life. His property was worth about five lakhs of rupees. He was 82 years old. Some days back he died. His wife, aged 78 years, resolved to burn herself with him. She collected all the materials that were required. She purchased camphor to the value of Rs. 5,000, sandalwood to the value of Rs. 1,280, ghee to the value of Rs. 100, and cloth to the value of Rs. 100 and distributed the rest of the money in charity. She distributed her landed property among all her male and female servants. She gave much to the poor and the needy and to the 'Bairagies.' Then wearing only one cloth on her body she was



ready to go on the funeral pyre when she was worshipped by all the people of that place. Nearly 15,000 people had assembled there. Her husband died early in the morning, but as she could not burn herself without taking leave of the Government she had to wait till two o'clock in the afternoon. At 2 o'clock the sepoy came and asked her if she had any difficulty as to lodging, boarding or clothing and promised to satisfy her. 'If there be any case of yours in any of the courts, please inform us and we will do everything to your entire satisfaction.' Upon this the widow said she had distributed her property amounting to some five lakhs of rupees and that she had no desire of any kind except going with her husband as a 'Sati.' She said she wanted nothing but a permission to die as a 'Sati.' For some reason or other she could not get the permission and at last the corpse of the husband alone had to be burnt. She felt very much for all this and abandoned food or water. She passed nine days in this way and on the tenth day she died with the name of her husband on her lips."

There are at least two other spots of interest in Udaipur. Passing down from the hill, from the

Palace, one comes to the great gate. Studded all over it are great spikes of which another curious legend is recorded. These spikes are found on many of the city gates in Rajputana and they are



Meera Bai's Temple, Udaipur.

a relic of the days when the siege of a city entailed an actual assault of the walls. To prevent elephants battering in the gates these spikes were placed over its outer surface. Once when such an assault was to be made on a city which had offered a

stubborn defence two chiefs were competing for their sovereign's favour. The time came to settle which was the more worthy. Whichever entered the city first, so ran the promise, should have the coveted rights for his clan. Immediately the assault began. The one knowing that his elephant would not charge the spikes tied himself in front of its eyes and gave the order to the *mahout* to charge. His body took the spikes and saved the elephant. Again it charged and again until the spikes stuck through his body and maddened the beast. Still it charged until at length, when almost dead, it broke through the gate.

Meanwhile the other assault had been proceeding. Choosing a spot which seemed less well guarded, ladders were placed against the wall. The chief mounted and as he reached the top a sword cleft his head. The body fell back only to be caught by the man below him. Without a moment's hesitation he grasped it in his arms and flung it over the wall. So he was the first to enter the city.



Beyond the walls close to the railway station is the village of Ar or Ahar. Here there are the traces of seven distinct cities, but all that remains, but a few

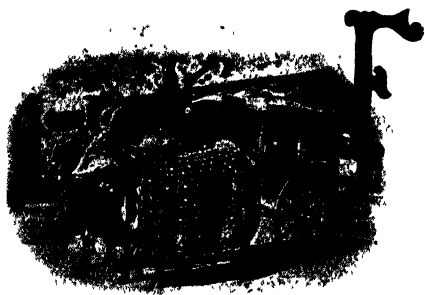
huts, is the Mahasatti. Here are the cenotaphs of all the chiefs since the valley became their residence. On one are a number of small stones built into the ridge which lies at the back of it, records of the great *Sati* of a king's harem. The attendant points it out with a note of sadness in his voice which seems to say "Ichabod."

It is his point of view.



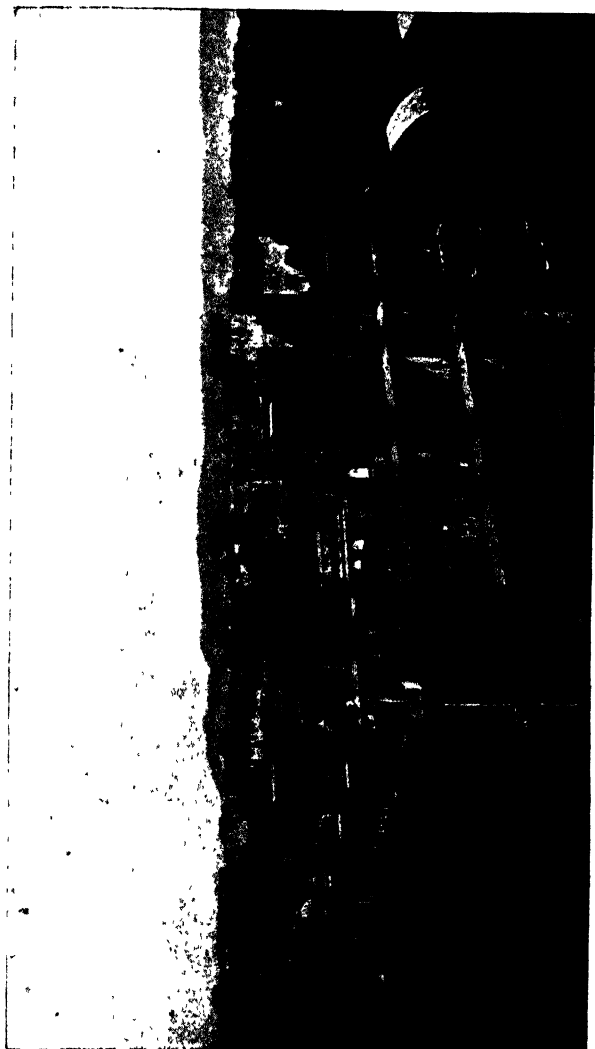
## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE CITY OF JAI SINGH.



FROM Udaipur to Jaipur is a day's journey, the first part of which, to Ajmer, is over old ground. Slightly to the west of Jaipur one passes the curious sight of a river-bed which has been turned into a garden. On either side the banks, cut into terraces, are covered with trees and greenery. Beyond the bank the dull brown of the Indian plains continues in an unbroken stretch to a flat range of hills on the horizon.

Old though the State of Jaipur is, the city itself is comparatively modern. The story commences with Dhola Rao and his Kachwahas leaving Ajodhya in Oudh and establishing a kingdom known as Dhundar on the west of the present frontier of the State. Some fifty years later he took Amber. Originally it was founded by the Mynas, a race of Upper India, supposed to be of unmixed blood, and by them it was consecrated to Amba, the Universal mother, and called Ghatta Rani, Queen of



The City from Sangani Gate, Jaipur.

the Pass. Gradually at first, then rapidly, Amba assumed the position which its strategical position warranted. It was in about 1017 that Dhola Rao secured the town. It only comes into prominence in history, however, as being the first of the Rajput States to give a daughter in marriage to the Moghul Emperor. Tod, the ardent lover of the Rajput independence, is furious about it. "By what acts or influence Akbar overcame the scruples of the Kachwaha Rajput," he says, "we know not, unless by appealing to his avarice or ambition ; but the name of Bhagwandas is execrated as the first who sullied the Rajput purity by matrimonial alliance with the Islamite." Whatever the reasons may have been, Jaipur had great influence at the Imperial Court. It was not long, however, before the position was usurped by Jodhpur, and it was then that Jai Singh, at the request of Joda Bae, daughter of the Raja of Bikanir, was raised to the throne of Amber. Under Jai Singh the city prospered immensely, the lake of Tal Kontora was formed, the rugged details of the fortress were softened down to conform to the ideas of splendour which should be found in a king's capital.



The palace which Maun Singh had started was continued, including the building of the Diwan-i-Khas or Privy Council Chamber.

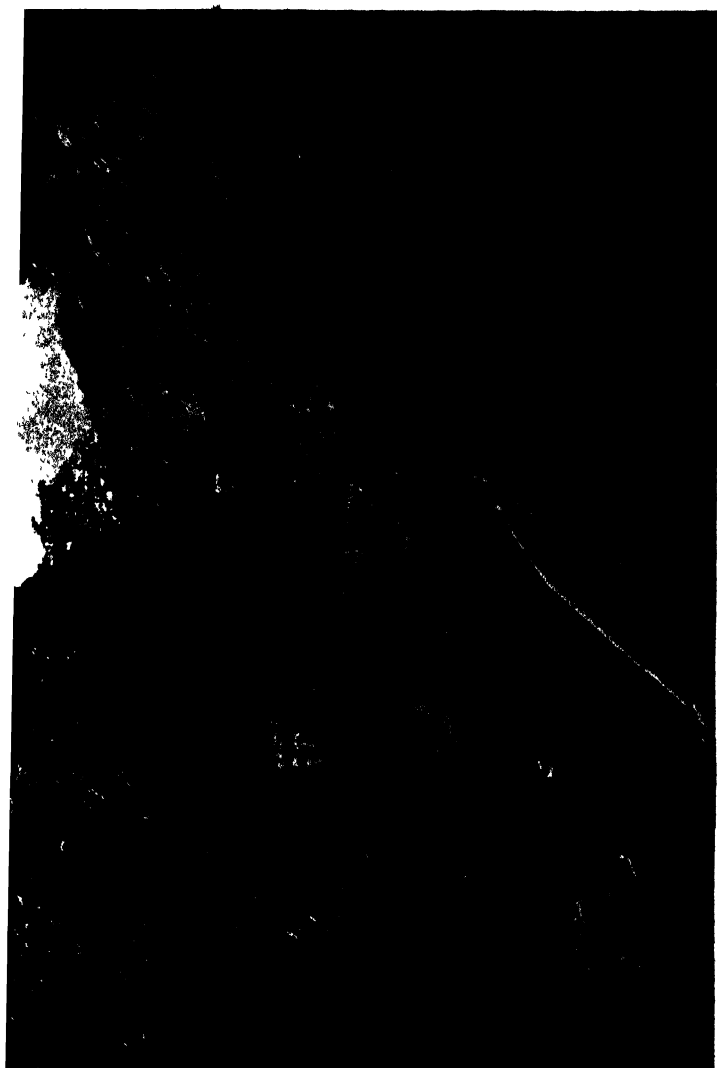




The end of Jai Singh is not unlike that of many who succeeded to the *gadi* in the old days of India: Proving himself to be a valiant soldier he was placed in command of the force which was sent by Aurangzeb against Sivaji. The terror of the Deccan was overpowered and was led to Delhi to receive the Royal pardon. The mission was not thoroughly successful, but three years later Jai Singh had attained to such influence that, in 1608, he was poisoned. His descendant, Jai Singh II., is, in his way, one of the most remarkable men in Indian History. "Sowae" Jai Singh ascended the throne in 1699, six years before Aurangzeb's death. As a statesman, legislator and man of science he was far in advance of any of his contemporaries. As a Rajput warrior, though noted for the campaigns he carried through, he does not appear well.

Astronomy was one of his favourite pursuits. Almost all the Rajput chiefs knew something of astrology, and therefore of astronomy. Jai Singh, however, was not content with this, and so famous were his researches that Mahomed Shah entrusted him with the reformation of the calendar. From observations he made throughout seven years at various observatories he constructed a series of tables. At that time he heard of the Portuguese tables of Dela Hire and sending to the Court of King Emmanuel he compared the two.

"On examining and comparing the calculations of these tables with actual observations," translates



Tod from the Prince's own account, "it appeared there was an error in the former in assigning the moon's place, of half a degree. Although the error in the other planets was not so great, yet the times of solar and lunar eclipses he (it should be noted that Jai Singh always speaks of himself in the third person) found to come out later or earlier than the truth by the fourth part of a *ghurry* or fifteen *puls* (*i.e.*, six minutes of time)." In 1729 at Delhi he determined the obliquity of the ecliptic to be  $23^{\circ}28'$ , which is within  $28''$  of what Godwin determined in the following year. Other tests have been made of his work and the conclusions he drew, and they place him high in the list of the great astronomers.

Amongst his acts was an order to secure the translation of Euclid's elements, the treatises on plain and spherical trigonometry and Napier on the use of logarithms into Sanskrit. The observatory which he erected stands to-day treasured by the State.

Jaipur itself is one of the most disappointing places in India. It was built according to the designs of Vedyadhar, Jai Singh's scientific assistant, and it resembles what Earl's Court might have been fifty years ago. Huge wide streets run in parallel lines forming squares which in their turn are cut up into smaller squares. The walls are all of a peculiar pink, which adds to the monotony, and many of the buildings are of only one storey, although the stucco wall is raised higher to add to the effect. It does

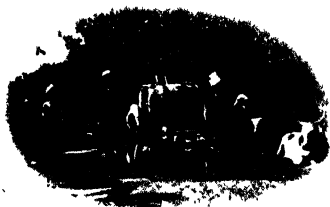


Scene on Banas River, Jaipur

add to the effect—of tawdriness. One can imagine nothing less oriental. The inhabitants themselves look out of place, as if wandering in a strange country. Jaipur can afford to be disappointing in architectural beauty, for it is one of the trade centres of Rajputana. The most notable sight in the city is the façade of the “Palace of the Winds.” It is merely glorified above the rest, because it is larger and more ornate. Were it a stone building with walls behind it the effect would probably be fine. As it is, the stucco mouldings become irritating.

Within the Palace itself it is much better. The usual odd mixture of gaudy furniture fills halls which should contain nothing to break the lines of the designer, but that is inevitable. Unfortunately palaces are not things to be visited frequently and at odd moments. A pass obtained from the British Resident is necessary and the time occupied in the inspection is limited within reason. To be able to wander in the many court-yards at will is the only possible way to appreciate all that this huge area contains.

My guide was one of the most delightful humourists I have met. With a wave of his hand he pointed to a gorgeous picture painted on the wall itself.



“When I am in Durbar Dress” he told me. Making all allowance for the Indian artist’s happy disregard of verisimilitude I looked and wondered. Never have I seen anything more unlike my tall lean friend and the short figure of the picture which, like Mr. P., must have “measured several yards about.” My guide burst into a merry peal of laughter. He had ceased to be my guide, unwittingly I had passed some test and was made a freeman of some of the secrets of the place. At least I hope they are secrets; if he gives the same information to all and sundry, then what are the Maharaja’s real secrets?

From a recess in the Diwan-i-am I purchased a Jaipur rupee. Armed with this I set out on the real tour of inspection. Devious ways lead on and on. Here were the fountains where the Maharaja in merry mood walked while his slave girls danced around him. Beyond the temple which faces up the fine avenue a narrow passage led to the lake. For a few annas *backshis* a small boy brought some waste meat.

“*Ao, mugger ao!*” called an old man as he tied a piece to some string. Black stones which lay just above the water suddenly became alive. In five minutes half a dozen ugly snouts were snapping at the dangling morsel. Mugger fishing might be good



sport carried out with proper apparatus. • It is a matter of a strong arm rather than a well-built rod and a better foothold than is obtainable on smooth marble/steps is essential. The feeding of muggers is interesting if somewhat barbarous.

On the way back the Maharaja's swimming bath was pointed out, complete with a diving chute.

Two turns more and the word *zenana* was whispered in my ear. High up in a wall, otherwise blank, were some tiny windows. Facing the wall obliquely stood a gun, far too big to move through any of the surrounding gateways, but of this my guide knew nothing. Its presence seems to add to the mystery of that blank *zenana* wall. Bishop Heber was once a visitor at the palace. His account of the occasion is pregnant with meaning. Accompanied by the Resident the visit was paid to the young Maharaja.

“ We sat cross-legged on the carpet, there being no chairs, and we kept our hats on,” says the Bishop, who was mortified that the Rani, who according to history was no fit companion for a Bishop, did not appear even behind the *purdah*. “ After the usual exchange of compliments some very common looking shawls, a turban, necklace, etc., etc., were brought in as presents from the Rani to me which were followed by two horses and an elephant, of which she also requested my acceptance. Of these presents,” writes the Bishop after returning



The Albert Museum, Jaipur



to the Residency, "it appeared that the elephant was lame and so vicious that few people ventured to go near him. One of the horses was a very pretty black, but he also turned out as lame as a cat, while the other horse was in a poor condition, and at least, as my people declared, thirty years old." The account is remarkably like that of a similar gift to Tavernier when he was endeavouring to collect a debt from an unwilling prince.

Eight years later the Rani died and two years later the young Jai Singh, murdered, it is supposed, by Jeta Rama, the lover of the Rani. Immediately the Agent to the Governor-General took charge of the infant heir. So great were his reforms that Jeta Rama was not long in forming a conspiracy to murder him. The attempt was unsuccessful though the assistant to the Agent fell a victim. Immediately the murderers were seized and executed, a Council of Regency was formed, and reforms became the order of the day. "The army was reduced," writes Mr. Aitchison, "every branch of the administration was reformed, and *sati*, slavery and infanticide were prohibited."

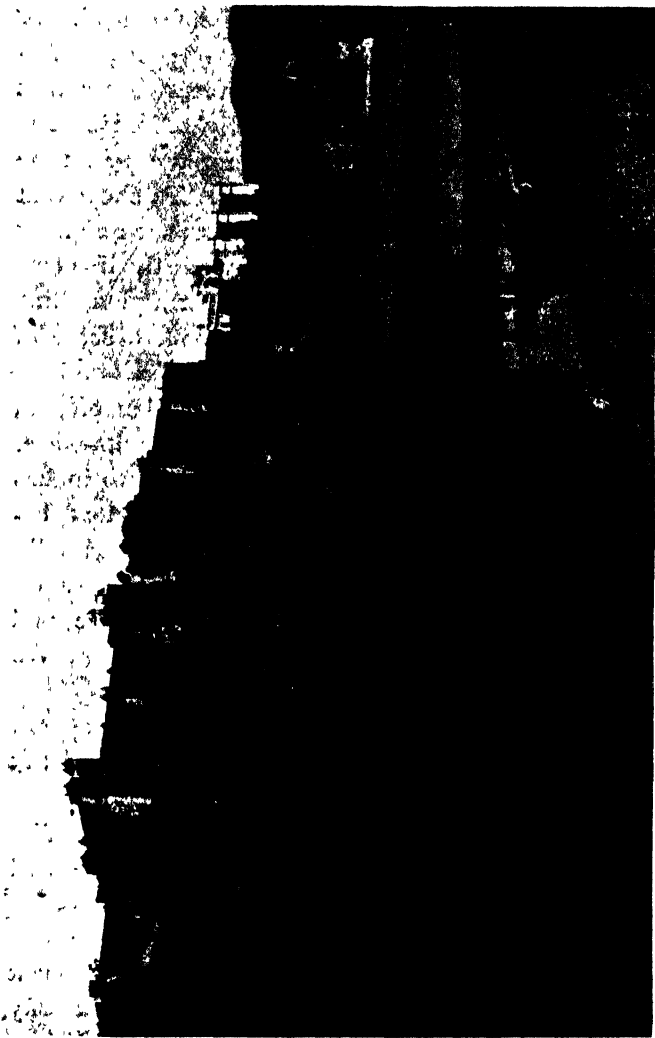
Outside the city walls is a fine public park with the Albert Hall standing in the midst, a handsome pile, the foundation stone of which was laid by the King in 1875. The building contains a large Durbar Hall and in other parts is one of the finest museums in India. "The silks and carpets, the porcelain and clay vessels, are well worth a close study," says Forrest, "and it is instructive to go



City View, Amber.

from the museum to the school of art and compare the work which is being done with the work of the past. The pencil drawings are very nice, the inlaid work is very pretty, but something has gone from the beauty, an indescribable something, the soul of the artist. A school of art does the same kind and amount of good as the purely external literary English education at the Maharaja's College, and it also works as much mischief." One of the sights of Jaipur is the zoological collection of the Maharaja who is an enthusiastic sportsman. Around the city herds of buck roam. In other parts more exciting game is to be had, but the whole is carefully preserved and permission to shoot is not always to be had.

Amber, the most interesting part of Jaipur, lies a few miles away within the wall which stretches along the side of the hill between the new city and the old. The drive is a pleasant one even in the heat of the day, for gardens and trees on either side give a coolness to the road. As you drive along you meet almost every form of conveyance in India. Here is a man gently urging on his lethargic bullocks with the heavy yoke on their necks. Further you will see a string of camels stepping gingerly along, as it seems, their soft spongy feet making no noise. The camel should rank as the most supercilious of all the animals created. As it walks its head moves from side to side, the long neck stretched out so that



Palace View from Lake, Amber.

the head is little above the back and so held that the nose is on a level with the forehead. A camel is always frowning. It seems to feel its position acutely and throws keen glances to see that no one is laughing at it. A lightly attired chorus girl meeting her mother-in-law for the first time could not look more self-conscious. To show that it has not always been accustomed to such a life it walks along with an eternal sniff while the lips curl in disgust, or else move rapidly muttering inaudible protests—obviously protests. Beyond, a score of donkeys are carrying packs of earth or salt or lime slung on either side, one load has fallen off and the drivers are trying to put it back in its place. By dexterous moves of little more than two inches at a time on the part of the donkey, the load becomes lighter, the road more strewn; eventually the pack is replaced and the procession starts off once more. You yourself are in a carriage and pair. You catch up a cloud of dust which proves to be an *ekka*.

Elsewhere I have described a tonga drive, but the *ekka* is far more important. No one who has not ridden in an *ekka* can say that he knows India. It consists of a board three feet square mounted high over the tyres of two small wheels; from each corner a thin pole rises for about three feet; over all is a canopy. I once saw eight people of different sizes crowded on an *ekka* while the wee rat of a pony made a good seven miles an hour. The driver was not beating it. He urged it on by a minute

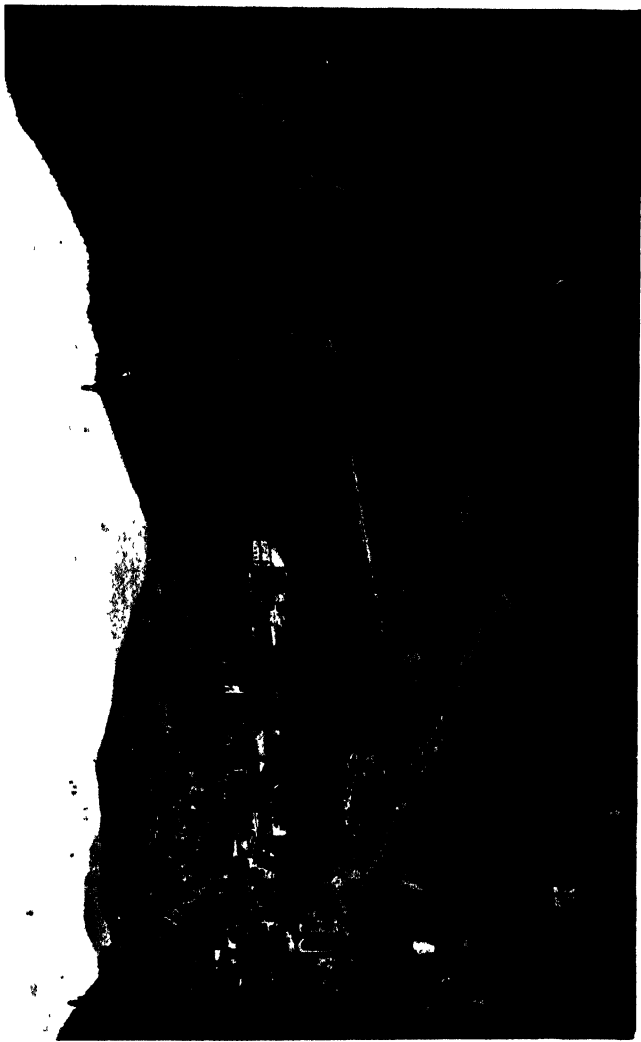
description of its ancestors with special reference to itself. He said nothing good about anything later than its great-great-grandfather and if all that was said was true it is marvellous that so willing a little beast was not the most depraved creature on earth. Perhaps in heredity, like gout, there is an occasional lapse of a generation.

At the gate, which lies from two to three miles from Amber, the carriage stops. You will see a bullock cart jogging gently on beyond this, but for some mysterious reason the *sahib's* carriage must stop here. Fortunately the Maharaja will put an elephant at your disposal for the last part and its value is obvious when the final climb into the fortress is reached. Up the side of a hill, which no motor car could tackle, the road leads through a handsome gate into a large quadrangle, on all sides of which are the stables that were once filled with elephants, camels and horses. A steep stone slope leads through another gateway into the palace itself. On



In Amber City.

the left a double row of columns, supporting a lofty ceiling, form the Diwan-i-Khas. The marble walls are inlaid with coloured stones and at the back, windows look down deep into the valley and the lake, where an energetic *dhobi*, beating out his clothes upon a stone, looks like a baby waving its arms. Tod tells of this a short story, which shows how petty can be the Imperial mind. "The first row of columns are of red sandstone with capitals of great beauty, on which elephants are sculptured, supporting with their trunks the sloping stone roof which descends from the cornice. The shafts of these columns are covered with a layer of smooth white stucco which hides the magnificent sculpture. No sooner had Mirza (Jai Singh I) completed the Diwan-i-Khas than it came to the ears of the Emperor Jehanghir that his vassal had surpassed him in magnificence and that this last great work quite eclipsed all the marvels of the Imperial city; the columns of red sandstone having been particularly noticed as sculptured with exquisite taste and elaborate detail. In a fit of jealousy the Emperor commanded that this masterpiece should be thrown down, and sent commissioners to Amber charged with the execution of his order: whereupon Mirza, in order to save the structure, had the columns plastered over so that the messengers from Agra should have to acknowledge that the magnificence which had been so much talked of was, after all, pure invention." Since then nothing has been done to restore the splendour and it is only an occasional glimpse.



City View from Palace, Amber



where the stucco has been knocked off, that shows how beautiful the work beneath is. Facing the Diwan-i-Khas is the King's house with a glorious gate covered in mosaic. Within is a garden, with a three-roomed hall on one side, the summer-house of the zenana where the ladies could come to enjoy the tinkle of water as it fell in a little cascade into an inlaid marble rivulet, so arranged that it seemed to flow in a thousand waves. This is the *Sukh Nawas* or Hall of Pleasure.

Here also is the Hall of Victory surmounted with the *Jas Mandir*, or Alcove of Delight. On one side it looks over the garden, on the other glimpses can be had of the rugged hill on which the fort is perched above the city. Beneath, desolate ruins are homes for nocturnal prowlers. At night the jackals howl to the moon one against the other ; flying-foxes, great bat-like beasts, flit silently by.

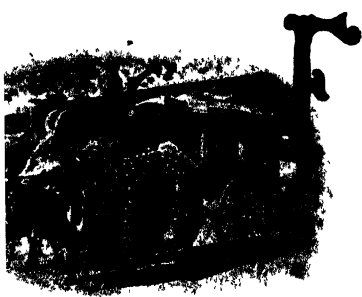
Once Amber throbbed with love and life and victory. To-day it lies silent, a ruin.

And all day long a bird sings there,  
And a stray sheep drinks at the pond at times ;  
The place is silent and aware ;  
It has had its scenes, its joys and crimes,  
But that is its own affair.



## CHAPTER IX.

### AGRA.



FROM Jaipur to Agra will always seem to me as something like a pilgrimage. The journey is filled with fears ; it is the last stage of the journey to the pearl of India ; what will be the sensation

when first one sees that which by many is held to be the most lovely building in the world ? Will it be, as it has been to millions, one of supreme content or will it be disappointment ?

The approach is through fertile land irrigated by canals from the sacred Ganges. Near the city itself runs the Jumna, another sacred river. But it is for none of these that one really comes to Agra, and when one alights at the huge station, over which hangs a span which would be considered large in many an English town, there is a strange feeling. Can this essentially modern structure be side by side with the Taj ?

Fifty yards away rises the wall of the Fort, a solid mass of red sandstone relieved only

by the rising inner wall and its battlemented summit. Full of interest, Agra holds three spots which surpass all others. At Sikandra is Akbar's tomb, within the town is the great Fort, beyond, on the river bank stands the Taj Mahal. The morning drive to Sikandra is one of great beauty. On either side trees stretch their branches out to form an unbroken avenue, children rejoicing in the freedom of their nakedness play by the roadside or sit in the shade doing their appointed task of watching the family cow as it grazes its fill or ruminates beneath a tree near by. An occasional glimpse of Akbar's tomb can be caught through the trees.

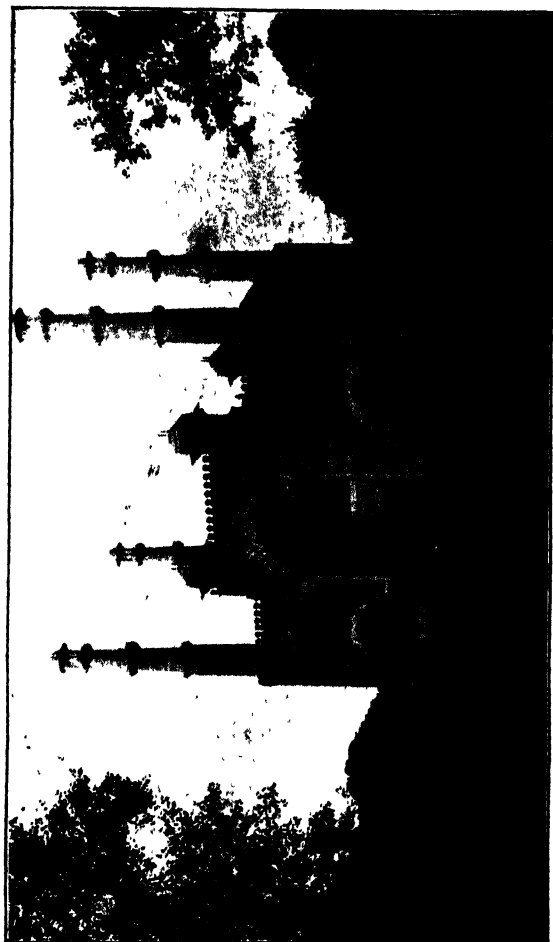
There is something of the feeling of an old ruined abbey at Home pervading Sikandra. The village possesses its church, built Englishwise, and here a school for native Christian children does much good work. Around are the remains of the places of former greatness. Within a stone's throw of the church is the tomb of Miriam. Standing up half-a mile away is Akbar's tomb guarded by three gates. Around it lie pleasant gardens and a broad paved terrace. Tall trees shade the paths and it is easy to imagine the great Emperor delighting in the summer-house which he erected.

As with all big monuments in India the guarding gates are in themselves notable buildings. Recently the main entrance has been restored. The minarets at the corners had fallen, but Lord Curzon decided that they should be rebuilt and ordered



Rear side of Fort, Agra.

that the work should be completed before the visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales in 1905. The order was given in April of that year and the initial difficulty was the quarrying of the marble at Makhrana, in Jodhpur, before the rains set in. Again, the height of the towers necessitated elaborate scaffolding, but owing to the limited space only a few stone cutters could work on each tower at a time, and to overcome the delay entailed, work was carried on continuously night and day. All will agree that the result is worth the trouble and sixty thousand rupees spent on it. From the roof one obtains the best view of the tomb, a red sandstone building relieved by marble. Its proportions are particularly fine and it is devoid of many of those details which elsewhere interrupt the outline. Perhaps one is a little inclined to find the red of all the four buildings monotonous, but in the tomb itself there is quite enough relief, and the sombre tint of the main building is a pleasing departure from the glare always found where white has been too extensively used. Facing the large court an enormous arched recess, covered with a delicately outlined dome raised on four pillars, gives the entrance through a trellised marble screen to the tomb itself. On either side walls, half as high as the arch, spread out, broken with smaller arches treated in much the same way. The exact area of the raised courtyard thus formed I do not know, but it cannot be less than the length of St. Stephen's facing the river. In the centre rises a forest of red pillars supporting another



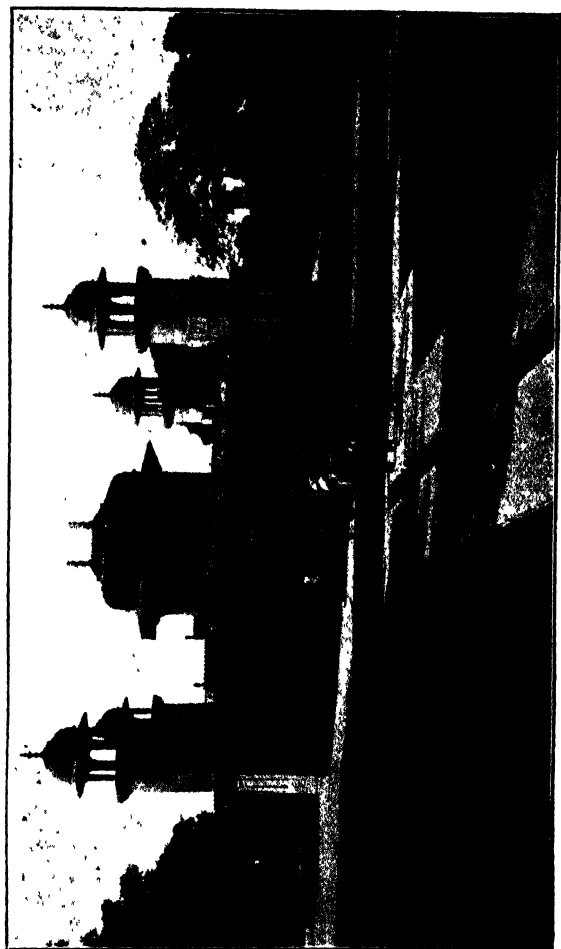
Tomb of Akbar, Sikandra.

storey, flanking domes relieving the lines. Above rise two more pillared terraces and crowning all is a white courtyard with minarets guarding each corner, the whole rising around the great dome which covers the tomb.

What kind of visitors the Government of India expects it would be hard to say. On the side of the door as one enters the tomb hangs a notice requesting such as do not remove their shoes to take off their hats. For whom is this intended? No one can enter the dark vault without a feeling of reverence.

An attendant carries a lamp to the depths where lies the plain marble block which covers the great Emperor. Above, into pitchy blackness, rises the dome. The guide looks up and calls softly in a deep voice "Allah" and the answer echoes back transformed by a thousand vibrations, as it trembles against the sides, into the most perfect harmony. A similar effect, I believe, is obtained in the vault at the Taj Mahal but a net work of scaffolding filled the place when I visited it.

Outside, steep steps lead up to the terraces above till the summit is reached—the pearl of the building. Its four walls are formed of delicate tracery, squares of black and white marble seem to throw up the brilliant whiteness of the surrounding cloisters; in the centre is another marble slab. Beneath in the vault flowers lie scattered on the smooth surface, here a master sculptor has worked. At the head



Tomb of Itmad-ud-Daula, Agra.



has been carved the word *Allah ho Akbar* the simple faith of the creed which teaches "God is great. There is no god but God." Truly the tomb is worthy of the man.

It took three thousand people working daily to build the tomb and yet it was half a lifetime in construction. Jehangir was not as satisfied with his work as those who follow him. In his diary he writes that he went on foot to see it.

"When I had obtained the good fortune of visiting the tomb and had examined the building which was erected over it, I did not find it to my liking. My intention was that it should be so exquisite that the travellers of the world could not say they had seen one like it in any part of the inhabited earth. While the work was in progress, in consequence of the rebellious conduct of the unfortunate Khusru, I was obliged to march towards Lahore. The builders had built it according to their own taste, and had altered the design at their discretion. The whole money had been thus expended and the work had occupied three or four years. I ordered that clever architects, acting in concert with some intelligent persons, should pull down the objectionable parts which I pointed out. By degrees a very large and magnificent building was raised, with a nice garden round it, entered by a lofty gate, consisting of minarets made of white stone."

On the other side of the Jumna, reached by a pontoon bridge is the tomb of Itmad-ud-Daula, lying back in a well kept garden which occupies scarcely as much space as Akbar's tomb alone. What the one gains in grandeur the other gains in delicacy. It is probably one of the first results of the effect of Italian artists on Indian Art, the period when the inlaying of marble with precious stones was first introduced, and it is finished



Interior of Pearl Mosque, Agra

with all the care and skill which the Italians could bring to bear upon it. Raised upon a dais in the midst of the garden it stands glittering in the sun, a square building covered with tracery both in mosaic and carving which have almost a prismatic effect. At each corner rises a minaret on an octagonal base; from the centre of the roof rise square walls ending in a flat dome. Itmad-ud-Daula was the Prime Minister of Jehangir and his king's appreciation is shown in the mausoleum he raised in his memory.

Recrossing the Jumna a step may be made into a combination of old and new. In place of the rattle and noise of the mills which has been heard elsewhere here is the babel of voices of a carpet factory. Tiny boys sit in rows in front of great looms deftly tying the knots which work into the designs of the luxuriant oriental carpet. The factory is owned by a German gentleman, Mr. Otto Weylandt, and he makes an admirable guide to the industry which has sprung up under his hands. After his explanation the great squares which grow so slowly take on a distinct individuality. The method of manufacture scarcely differs from that of Persia or the shawl making of Kashmir. The dexterity of the boys as they respond to the *ustad*—"lift two and use red" or "lift one and use green" is marvellous.

The way leads on to the Delhi gate, the entrance to the Fort. From the outside appearance one is

little prepared for what lies within. A steep and narrow entrance through the high red walls suddenly gives on to a large green lawn. The path leads to a fine gateway and at once the gaze meets a great marble courtyard flanked on either side with arches and exquisite pillars. In front is a marble mosque, the roof, crowned with three marble domes, resting on a row of triple pillars most exquisitely carved at the base. This is the *Moti Musjid*, the "Pearl Mosque." Here once all Agra came to worship on Friday, now its worshippers are a small band, and the Jumma Musjid, near the station, is the chief mosque of the people. From the Moti Musjid a short distance leads to another gateway and beyond lies the Anguri Bagh, the grape garden. Ridges of red sandstone divide the grass into small curved compartments while, from the centre, white marble paths radiate to the sides. Around are the chief compartments of the harem, and on one side the *Khas Mahal*, looking like a palace of wax. In front a flat roof rests on engrailed arches springing from massive pillars ornamented with sprays of flowers. These small arches lead on to the hall, and still further to the view over the river. Here, and here only, should the Taj Mahal be seen for the first time. When Shah Jehan, a prisoner in



Khas Mahal, Agra.

the fort where he had reigned, was dying, he asked that he might be allowed to go once more to the harem, the Samam Burj, to gaze upon the Taj, and here, looking on the tomb of her whom he loved as only the " Beautiful Palace " tells how, he died.

An authentic description of the harem is given by Itmad-ud-Doula. It contained a separate room, he says, for every one of the five thousand women who were divided into companies with proper employment assigned to each individual. Over each of these companies a woman was appointed, and one was selected for the command of the whole, that the affairs of the harem might be conducted with the same regularity as the other departments of the State.

" Every one received a salary according to her merit. The pen cannot measure the Emperor's *largesse*, but the ladies of the first quality received from one thousand to sixteen hundred rupees, and the servants, according to their rank, from two rupees to fifty-one per month. And whenever any of this multitude of women wanted anything, they applied to the treasurer of the harem, who,

according to their monthly pay, took care their wants should be supplied." The inside of the harem was guarded by women, and the



Jasmine Tower, Agra.

most confidential were placed about the royal apartments. The eunuchs watched immediately on the outside gate, and at proper distances were placed the Rajpoots and porters ; and on the outside of the enclosure the *Omrahs*, the *Ahdecaris* and other troops mounted guard according to their rank. "But besides all the precautions, his Majesty depends on his own vigilance as well as on that of his guards." Occasionally his vigilance and that of his guards failed for a time. How, we do not know, but a carved beam over a gloomy pit in the vaults below, tells of the fate of those who succumbed to opportunity.

The Jasmine Tower was the room of the Chief Sultana. Pillars, covered with inlaid marble between the flutings, support the beautiful capitals on which rests the still more beautiful cornice. The inner walls are more beautiful than the cornice. It is the most perfect boudoir ever designed. Near by is the Diwan-i-Khas, and the great terrace with the two thrones, one black and one white. Beneath the black slab is pointed out a red stain where the stone cracked and bled when defiled by the infidel Bhartpur, who in 1764 took the fort by the aid of Suraj Mall and the Swiss renegade Walter Reinhardt, better known as Samru. The existence of the stain is reduced to the commonplace by a scientific explanation. The use of the stone, as described by Hawkins, who visited Agra during the reign of Jehangir, is interesting.

“In the morning at day-break, the King is at his beads, praying, on his knees, upon a Persian lambskin, having some eight rosaries, or strings of beads, each containing four hundred. The beads are of rich pearl, ballace rubies, diamonds, rubies, emeralds, aloes, wood, *eshem* and coral. At the upper end of a large black stone, on which he kneels, there are figures graven in stone of the Virgin and Christ ; so, turning his face to the west, he repeats three thousand and two hundred words, according to the number of his beads.”

On the other side is the Vizier's white marble slab overlooking the *Machi Bhawan* or fish tank; near by is the *Shisha Mahal*, a curious room, containing a deep bath, the roof and walls being a mass of tiny pieces of looking glass cemented into crushed talc and mica which shines like silver.

Hawkins gives a detailed account of the splendour of the Court of Jehangir and of his methods as a ruler. But the best record of the splendour of the Court is the beauty which has remained. So great is the palace that the services of one of the Babu guides, who use impossible words in impossible contexts, are advisable for the first visit. Without some one showing the way many of the most delightful corners may be missed. But the only way to enjoy the Agra Fort is in solitude wandering gently from spot to spot. It is a place to dream in.



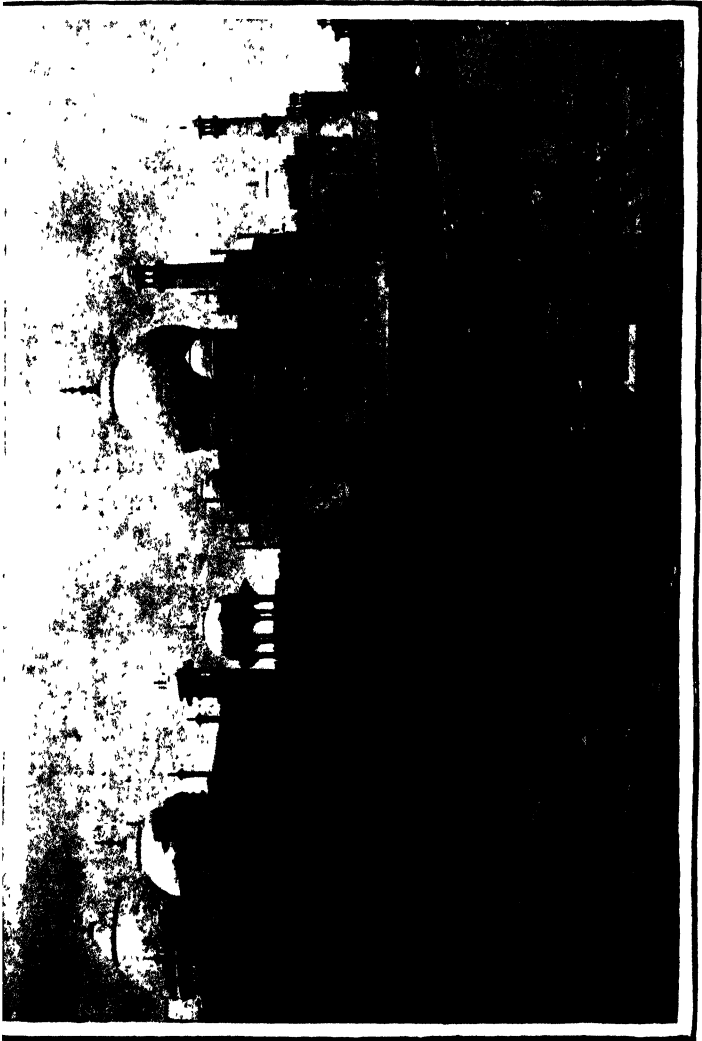
Diwan-i-Khas and the Black and White Thrones, Agra, with the Taj in the distance.



Agra is full of the beauty of the past. It was well said of the Moghals that they built like Titans and finished like jewellers. The fort with its many styles is a thing never to be forgotten, but Agra contains as well the most perfect building in the world.

It is the usual custom to time the visit to coincide with the full moon. The Taj by moonlight is the sight of India, and in the pure white light it might almost be unreal, so wonderful is its beauty. The dark trees throw it up pure white against the black sky, lines soften into mist, shadows fall athwart its dome and seem to quiver. Gradually as the moon rises higher the shadows disappear, it grows whiter and whiter until it stands out against its dark background of sky, rivalling the moon itself.

But there is another time to see the Taj when it is equally beautiful for one fleeting moment, perhaps more beautiful. Drive out along the river bank in the early morning when the moon, the last crescent of a hair's breadth, is scarcely higher than the trees which fill the garden. Down the great avenue of marble tanks, the long lines of *arbor vitæ* the eye finds only a misty shape, white here and there, a network of lights and shadows. The mist from the Jumna chills the air. Save for the splash of a fish rising in the tank for an early fly there is not a whisper. Approach gradually to the central dais and rest. Very, very slowly the



THE OLD BRICK BUILDING AT THE

light grows clearer : the eyes become accustomed to the mist and pick out fresh lines, gradually piecing the whole together. In the East the sky grows greyer and greyer. Then long beams shoot high into the sky, a faint tinge of pink suffuses the horizon, the pink grows paler and paler. In the trees a bird utters a short sharp cry. Then all is still again. A moment later the pink has gone and a tender gold has taken its place. Still the silence, but through it one hears the pulse of nature beating into life.

There, stately in its pure white can now be seen every line, every curve blending into other curves, rising to the summit where a crescent and spear point to heaven.

One moment more, the sun has topped the horizon. A blaze of gold touches everything. In place of the cold marble is a towering palace of pure gold, and as if in ecstasy the world breaks out in song from every tree. One dare hardly breathe, for this is not a marble building but the picture drawn by Shah Jehan's love.

The Taj baffles description, for it is impossible to convey in words the effect which has been produced. Models of white marble can be purchased, made to scale, and following every detail, yet even they give no idea of the beauty of this dream in marble.

As in Akbar's tomb the actual sarcophagus is in a vault reached through a chamber that was once

a blaze of gold and royal blue. A steep passage leads down to the great marble screens through which the light enters and falls on the two tombs, Shah Jehan and the Mumtaz Begam. Flowers lie above her continually and give a faint scent as of a woman's room. For a time, one can see, one wishes to see, nothing but the marble slab which is the heart of the building. Then when one has looked one's fill the decorations come into view. The walls are covered with inlaid work in precious stones, jasper and agate, with which every spandril and prominent feature is freely covered. White and brown marble relieves the monotony of the wreaths and scrolls. The interior design is as perfect as the whole conception. Above are replicas of the tombs, as at Sikandra, lying side by side surrounded by cloisters of perfect arches and the most delicate trellis work.

In the entrance gate a small room is devoted to records. Photographs taken during a series of many years show what has been done in improving the gardens and opening out the main avenue so as to give the unbroken view which gives the present effect of perfect purity.

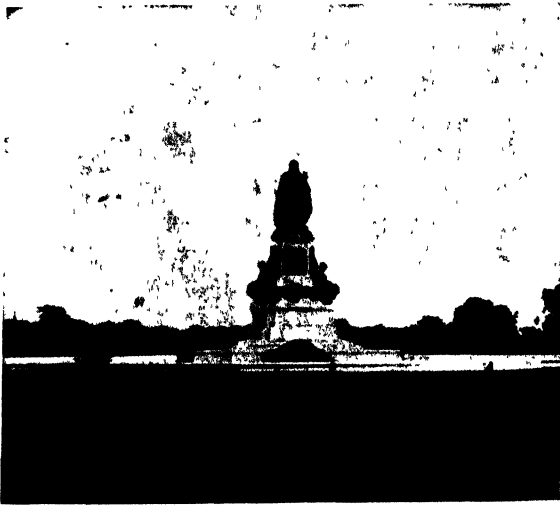
Plans of the original construction can be seen designed by Austin de Burdo, the Italian who built all Delhi Fort and the Taj Mahal, and whose picture worked in inlaid marble is placed in the wall above the throne in the Diwan-i-am at Delhi.

That, however, which is most worth seeing is a miniature of Mumtaz-i-Begam which faces another

of Shah Jehan. The oriental idea of beauty in a woman is somewhat different to our own, yet here is a woman who would be considered beautiful anywhere in the world. The round oval face is set in a massive head-dress of pearls which stretches down to the shoulders. The eyes are very, very soft, slightly almond shaped, the skin transparently clear with the faintest darkness of the under skin to give the face warmth and light. No wonder that she was so loved.

Her history is given by Forrest and it forms a pretty story to remember as one looks up the long avenue from the roof of the entrance gate. "Nur Mahal" was daughter of a native of Tartary who came to seek fortune at the court of Akbar. He was so poor that, placing his wife on a horse, he himself was obliged to perform the journey on foot. Before he reached his destination a daughter was born to him, to whom he gave the name "Light of the Palace." His talents gained him the favour of Akbar, who made him Chancellor of the Exchequer. The daughter born in the desert grew up to be a woman of surpassing beauty, and one day, when paying a visit to the Queen, she met the heir-apparent and won his heart by dropping her veil, as if by accident, and in the graceful confusion occasioned by the incident, allowing her beautiful eyes to rest upon his. The young Prince desired to make her his wife, but the Emperor refused to allow the marriage and tried to put Nur Jehan out of his son's way by causing her to be married to a

young Persian nobleman—Shir Afghan Khan—who received high employment in Bengal. When Shah Jehan ascended the throne he commanded the divorce of Nur Jehan, but the husband refused, and after several ineffectual attempts the Emperor caused him to be slain. Nur Jehan was brought



The Victoria Memorial, Agra.

to Delhi. The Emperor, in a fit of remorse, however, refused to see her and granted only a paltry allowance for the support of herself and her slaves. To supplement her scanty means, Nur Jehan, who was endowed with ability as well as beauty, proceeded to work pieces of rich embroidery and to paint silks and sell them to the inmates of the *harem*. The money gained, she

spent in embellishing her apartments and adorning her slaves. She herself, to suit the character of a poor widow, affected a plain and simple dress. The fame of her skill and her taste spread far and wide, and reached the ears of the Emperor. His curiosity was aroused, and one day he surprised her in her apartments. She arose and saluted him, and with down-cast eyes stood before him attired in simple dress. Her stature, shape, beauty and voluptuous grace revived the old passion. Astonished at the contrast between her simple attire and the splendour which surrounded her, the Emperor asked :

“ Why this difference between the Sun of women and her slaves ? ”

With a woman's wit she replied : “ Those born to servitude must dress as it shall please those whom they serve ; these are my servants and I lighten the burden of bondage by every indulgence in my power, but I, who am your slave, O Emperor of the world, must dress according to your pleasure and not my own.”

The reconciliation became complete. Nur Mahal became the wife of Shah Jehan and from the day she was married she virtually took the reins of government into her own hands.

How completely she accomplished this and with what success is told by a Mahomedan historian. “ Day by day her influence and dignity



The principal Moghul Kings and Queens.



increased, first of all she received the title of *Noor Mahal* 'Light of the Harem' but was afterwards distinguished by that of *Noor Jehan Begam* 'Light of the World.' All her relations and connections were raised to honour and wealth. \* \* \* No grant of land was conferred upon any one except under her seal. In addition to giving her the titles that other kings bestow, the Emperor granted Nur Jehan the rights of sovereignty and government. Sometimes she would sit in the balcony of the palace, while the nobles would present themselves and listen to her dictates. Coin was struck in her name, with this inscription : 'By order of the King, gold has a hundred splendours added to it by receiving the impression of Nur Jehan, the Queen Begam.' On all *firman*s also receiving the Imperial signature the name of 'Nur Jehan, the Queen Begam' was jointly attached. At last her authority reached such a pass that the King was such only in name. Repeatedly he gave out that he had bestowed the sovereignty on Nur Jehan Begam and would say 'I require nothing but a *sir* of wine and half a *sir* of meat.' It is impossible to describe the beauty and wisdom of the Queen. In any matter that was presented to her if a difficulty arose, she immediately solved it. Whoever threw himself upon her protection was preserved from tyranny and oppression ; and if ever she learned that any orphan girl was destitute and friendless she would bring about her marriage and give her a wedding portion. It is probable that during her reign no

less than five hundred orphan girls were thus married and portioned."

Tavernier adds somewhat to the history of the Taj:—

"I saw the beginning and completing of this work that cost two and twenty years' labour and twenty thousand men always at work; so that you cannot conceive but that the expense must be excessive. Cha-Jehan had begun to raise his own monument on the other side of the river; but the wars with his son broke off that design, nor did Aurangzeb, now reigning, ever take any care to finish it."

The plan was to raise a Taj of black marble on the opposite side of the river connecting the two with a black and white marble bridge. Nothing now remains of the work, if it ever reached a further stage than the foundations, and beautiful though it would have been, one cannot help being glad that Shah Jehan lies beside the wife he worshipped.



An Indian Railway Station.

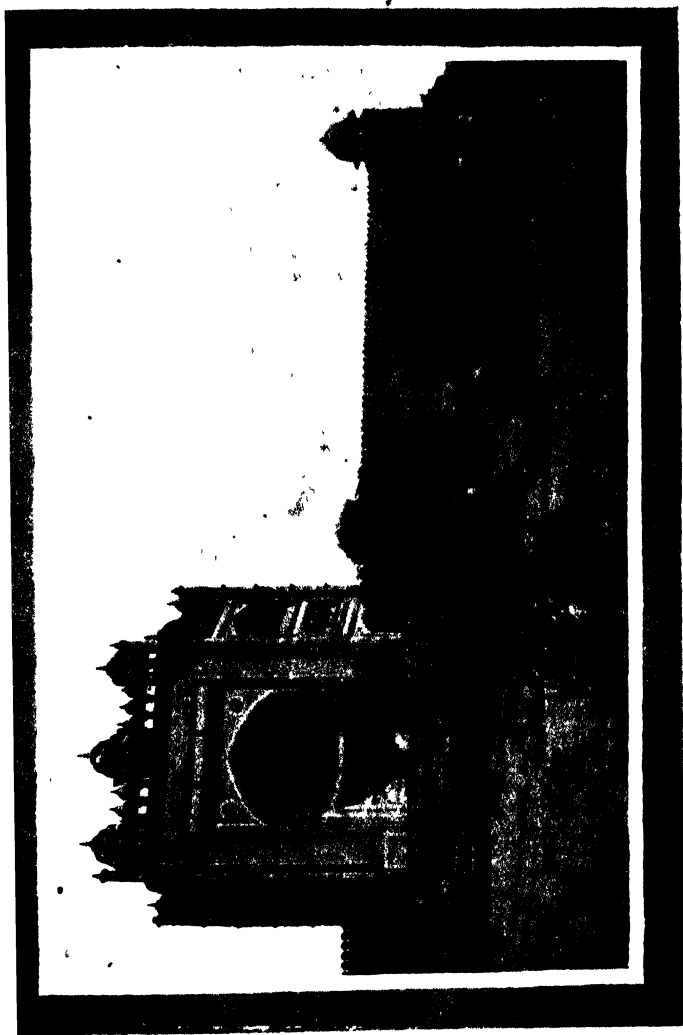
## CHAPTER X.

### FATEHPUR SIKRI AND ALWAR.



SOME twenty or thirty miles from Agra stands Fatehpur Sikri, a deserted palace. The most comfortable way to visit it is to arrange for a relay of horses and to drive from Agra. A quicker way is to leave Agra by the mid-day train for Achnera and to drive up from there, the only disadvantage being that an ekka must take place of a comfortable carriage. The drive in either case is an exceptionally pretty one. Fatehpur Sikri has a delightful legend to account for its existence. Its position on the summit of a hill shows that it was intended for a stronghold and the remains of the seven miles of walls are substantially built. Once it must have been of enormous size, but now nothing remains but the palace and a cluster of buildings facing the great gate.

The legend runs that Akbar returning from a campaign pitched his camp at the foot of the hill. Recently he had lost twin children, borne to him by his Hindu wife. On the hill resided a famous hermit, Sheik Salem Chishti, who pro-



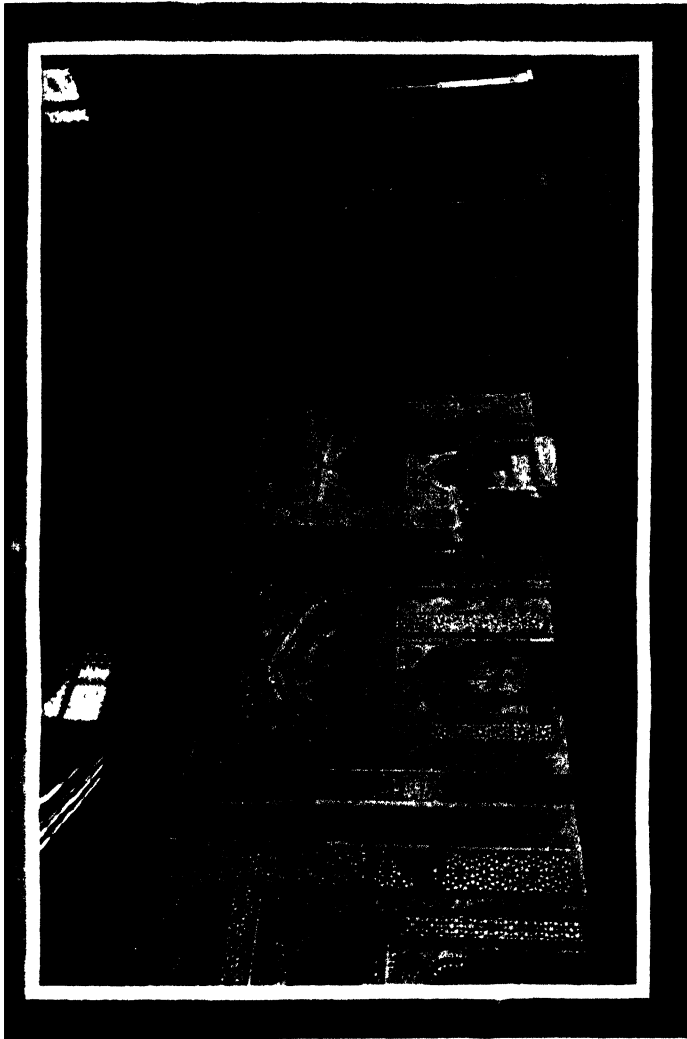
Gate of Victory, Fatehpur Sikri

mised them a son if they would live there. They consented and in time a son was born, Salem, who afterwards ascended the throne as the Emperor Jehangir. Within the palace is a small tomb from which a tree grows. Here lies the son of the hermit. One of the hereditary priests who act as guides to the spot which came into existence at the request of their sainted ancestor, will, if pressed, tell the story of the little tomb. One day the boy, then but six months old, spoke for the first time. Seeing his father in grief he sat up in his cradle and enquired the cause.

“Oh, my son,” said the saint, “it is written that the Emperor will never have a son unless some other man will sacrifice the life of his own heir; and surely no one is capable of such an act.”

“If you will allow me,” answered the child, “I will die in order that his Majesty may be consoled.” And immediately the infant died. If there be any truth in the transmigration of souls, surely Jehangir should be none other than the saint’s son.

The palace is entered by a steep flight of steps narrowing to the great Gate of Victory which leads to the courtyard of the mosque. Here, dazzling white against the red sandstone, of which every other part of Fatehpur Sikri is composed, stands the shrine of the saint. A deep cornice upheld by pillars and brackets of most exquisite design rests on the marble lace-work



Interior of Salem Christ's Tomb, Fatehpur Sikri.

which forms the walls. Within is a second screen inlaid with mother-o'-pearl and in the centre lies the saint's tomb flanked with wooden pillars, the whole being inlaid with mother-o'-pearl with perfect workmanship. Tied to the tendrils of the window at the head are countless pieces of string and rags. Here hopeless women come praying that what the saint once did he will do for them. Not only natives come ; many a European woman has



Salem Christi's Tomb, Fatehpur Sikri.

held her husband's hand there while the priest tied the thread to the window and muttered a few words of blessing. When I visited the place I noticed a sheet of paper attached to a red scarf. On it was written in flowing Persian characters : "I am in great trouble. Help me, oh Saint, who art friend of the Prophet of God." Beside this offering of a rich man who had travelled far, hung the dirty string of a poor coolie woman. But in this desire of all men there are no distinctions of rich and poor.



**Pillar of Diwan-i-Khas, Fatehpur Sikri.**

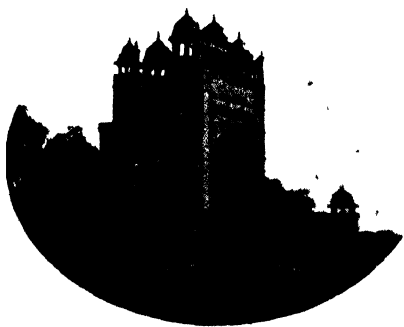


The shrine stands in the court of the great mosque which, as an inscription tells, is a replica of the mosque at Mecca, but is red instead of black. Around are the cloisters, five hundred feet long on each side, and surmounted by a thousand cupolas. Near by is the "Stone-cutters' Mosque" erected for the saint by the stone-cutters who were also his disciples. Returning one sees the inside of the Gate of Victory with its inscription "Said Jesus, on whom be peace! The world is a bridge; pass over it, but build no house on it. He who hopeth for an hour, may hope for eternity. The world is but an hour, spend it in devotion, the rest is unseen."

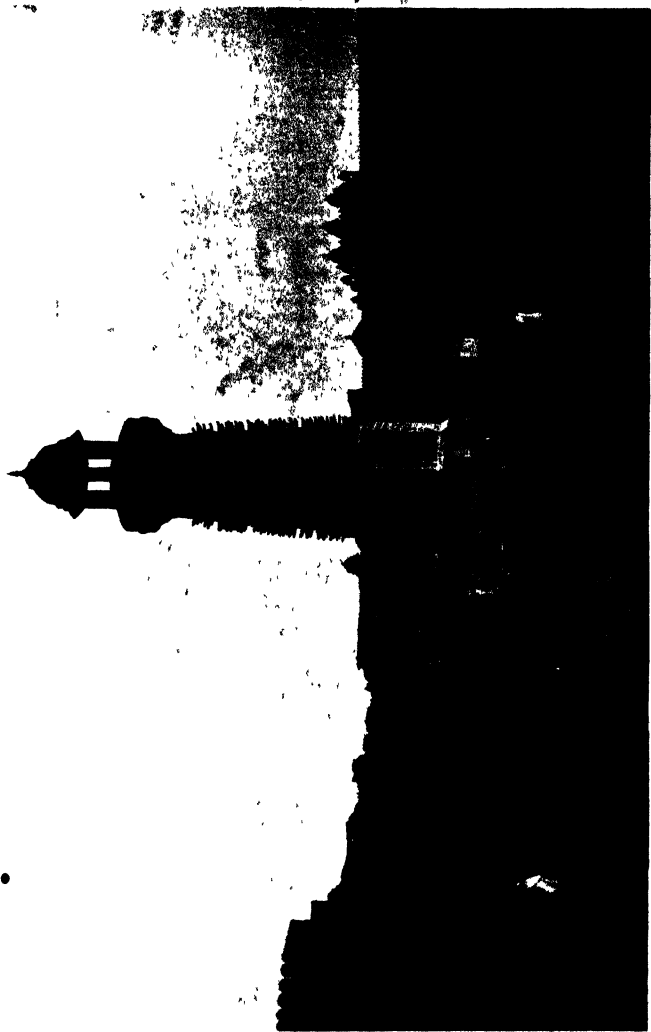
In the courtyard is a tank of sweet water. Elsewhere the water is brackish, and Finch, who visited the place two hundred years ago, says that it was the illness caused by the brackish water that caused Akbar to leave the city before it was finished. Another story says that he left at the request of the saint, because the noise of the court disturbed his meditations. The former is probably correct.

Passing through a lofty gate one enters another quadrangle, where a roof covered with blue enamel shelters the house of Jodh Bai, the wife of Jehangir.

The identity of



Gateway, Fatehpur Sikri.



The Elephant Tower, Fatehpur Sikri.

the mother of Jehangir is uncertain, but he relates that she was called Mariam Zamanah or "Mary of the period." Mary is held in reverence by the Mahomedans and several writers ascribe to this the story that Akbar had a Christian wife called Bibi Mariam, supposed to have been a Portuguese. In Mariam's house are pointed out pictures of biblical subjects, but little remains, and it is hard to distinguish exactly what the pictures represent, but the one over the door is supposed to be the Annunciation.

The house of Birbal's daughter near by is an example of the love of Hindus to crowd every inch with carving and had it been of wood instead of stone nothing more elaborate could have been conceived. Close at hand the *Panch Mahal* or "five palaces" served various purposes including that of nursery. Open on three sides, each floor is supported on a forest of pillars, every one of which is of different design, the whole decreasing in size as it mounts upwards to the dome surmounting a square roof resting on four pillars. From the *Panch Mahal* the way leads to the *Khwabgarh* or "House of Dreams," in other words Akbar's bedroom. Opposite is the *Diwan-i-khas*, in the centre of which rises an enormous column spreading out in a hundred tiny steps as it blends into the capital and supporting bridges which extend to the four corners.

Akbar was far from being an orthodox Mahomedan, and it is said that here he sat in the middle



arguing with four priests of different creeds. Jehangir wrote:

“ My father used to hold discourses with learned men of all persuasions, particularly with the Pundits, and was illiterate, yet from constantly conversing with learned and clever persons, his language was so polished, that no one could discover from his conversation that he was entirely uneducated. He understood even the elegancies of poetry and prose so well that it is impossible to conceive any one more proficient.”

This seems a curious kind of illiteracy, but probably refers only to his youthful learning. In another place Jehangir writes :

“ He was of middling stature, but with a tendency to be tall, wheat colour complexion, rather inclining to dark than fair, black eyes and eyebrows, stout body, open forehead and chest, long arms and hands. There was a fleshy wart, about the size of a small pea, on the side of his nose, which appeared exceedingly beautiful and was considered very auspicious by physiognomists who said it was the sign of immense riches and increasing prosperity. He had a very loud voice and a very elegant and pleasant way of speech. His manners and habits were quite different from those of other persons and his visage was full of godly dignity.” In the courtyard outside is a slab on which the Emperor sat to play *pachisi*, a game not unlike chess with dice throwing included. Here the game was played in an imperial way with



Front view from Palace Gate Alwar.

beautiful slaves from the harem as pawns. To the left is the *Ankh Mechauli* or hide and seek place. The idea that it was used as the treasury is scarcely tenable, for it is far too open, whilst a ruined building opposite the Mint is built in a manner which would make it safe for its purpose.

Before leaving, a visit should be made to the Elephant Gate. Two enormous red elephants flank the sides, but their heads were destroyed by the bigoted Aurangzeb. At the foot of the hill stands a quaint monument to a favourite elephant with imitation tusks bristling out of it.

From Achnera a short journey through sandy country leads on to Alwar, the capital of the Native State of that name. It is obvious that the visitor here is not too highly appreciated by the powers that be, for the only conveyances that can be obtained must be hired at an exorbitant rate from the palace. The dāk bungalow near the station is the property of the State and, though comfortable, in no way justifies a charge of double the amount charged anywhere else. Despite such little inconveniences an interesting stay can be made. The area of the State is about three thousand square miles, and it is divided into two natural sections, the open north and the rugged, hilly south. Originally it consisted of petty chiefships owing allegiance to Jaipur and Bhartpur. In 1771 however Pratap Singh, who at that time possessed only two villages and a half, succeeded in establishing independent power in the southern part of the

State. In 1776 he seized the town of Alwar and was acknowledged Chief, Rao Raja of the whole State. In 1803 British Protection was accepted, but a few years later a British force was sent to restore order after the seizure of territory in Jaipur. Many intrigues are contained in the history of the State, but few are of great importance.

A huge rampart encircles the city, but the chief protection is the ridge of precipitous hills which rise abruptly from the city itself. Crowning this is the fort and palace erected by the first two Naruka rulers, probably built by Nikumbh or Nikumpa Rajputs. Nine miles away from the city is the splendid lake of Silserh which is the main water supply of Alwar. The city is entered by a double gate guarded by canon. Within the walls the first point of interest is the Tripolia, an ancient tomb at which four streets meet, said to be the tomb of Tarang Sultan, a brother of the Emperor Firoz Shah. The temple of Jagannath, the shrine of Bhikan, the tomb of the Maharaja Bakhtawar Singh and the Palace with the public gardens are the other points of interest, while the central tank is a picturesque sight in the cool of the evening.



Ud-Country Camel Cart



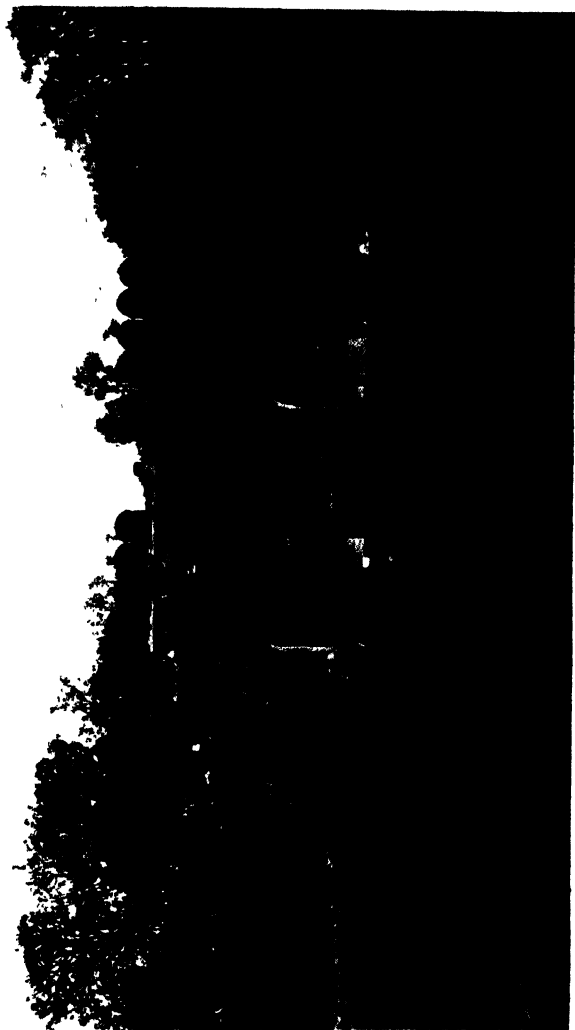
## CHAPTER XI.

### DELHI, THE CITY OF KINGS.



THE City of Delhi is the Mecca of the Indian historian. In the early pages of this book I have briefly outlined how the city became the centre of all the operations of the Mahomedan invader. Always the idea was that to hold Delhi was to hold India and its true and full history has yet to be written. Much is lost for ever, but much has been discovered, and with that much I propose to deal as concisely as possible, leaving the serious student to the many volumes which have been devoted to Delhi alone. Space forbids me to delve too deeply into the subject, for the story of this city, which has gradually moved as the course of the Jumna has moved, is not a patchwork, pieces of which may be examined while others are left, but a continuous chain in which one broken link makes much that follows almost unintelligible.

To the home-loving Englishman Delhi is remembered as the spot where the most heroic act



Kashmir Gate, Delhi.

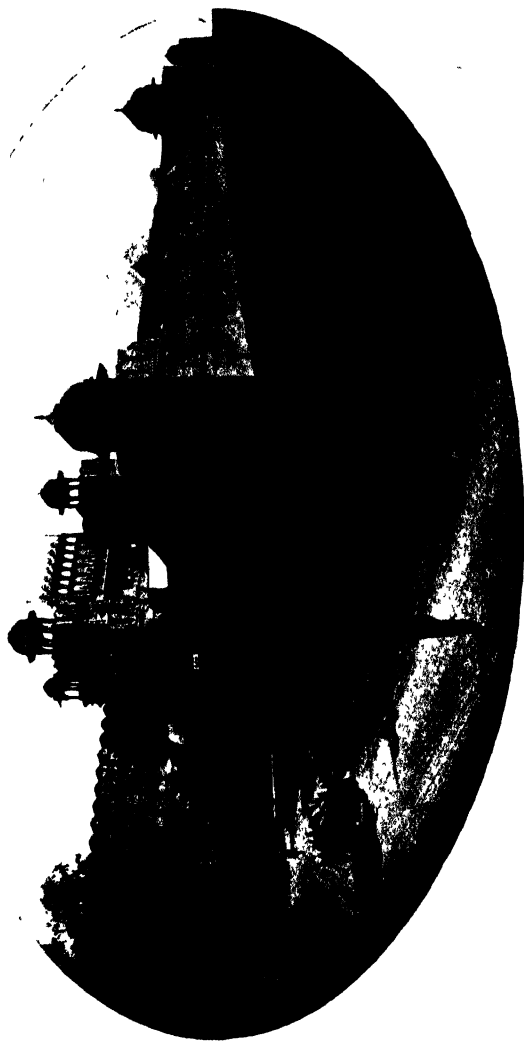
of the Mutiny was performed. To the Indian Delhi is a place of kings and a place of war, where peace has reigned only since it came under British rule.

Modern Delhi, or Shahjahannabad, as its name was at first, is only two hundred and fifty years old but there has been a city here for countless generations. Fanshawe, who spent many years at Delhi collecting records of its history, gives six distinct cities, but adds that there were several other sites which are now unknown. He traces them from north to south and gives them in order: Firozabad, adjoining modern Delhi on the south and built by Firoz Shah Tughlak in about 1360; Indrapat, built by Humayun and Sher Shah on the site of a still older city two miles south of Delhi, in about 1540; Siri (now Shahpur), four miles south-west of Indrapat, built in about 1300; Jahanpanath, on the space between Siri and Old Delhi, which became gradually occupied and was ultimately



Cross from the Old Delhi Church.

connected by walls with the cities north and south of it (about 1330); Old Delhi on the Fort of Rai Pethora, the original Delhi of the Pathan invaders in the twelfth century, containing the Kutab Minar, three miles south-east of Siri (1150—1350) and Tugh-

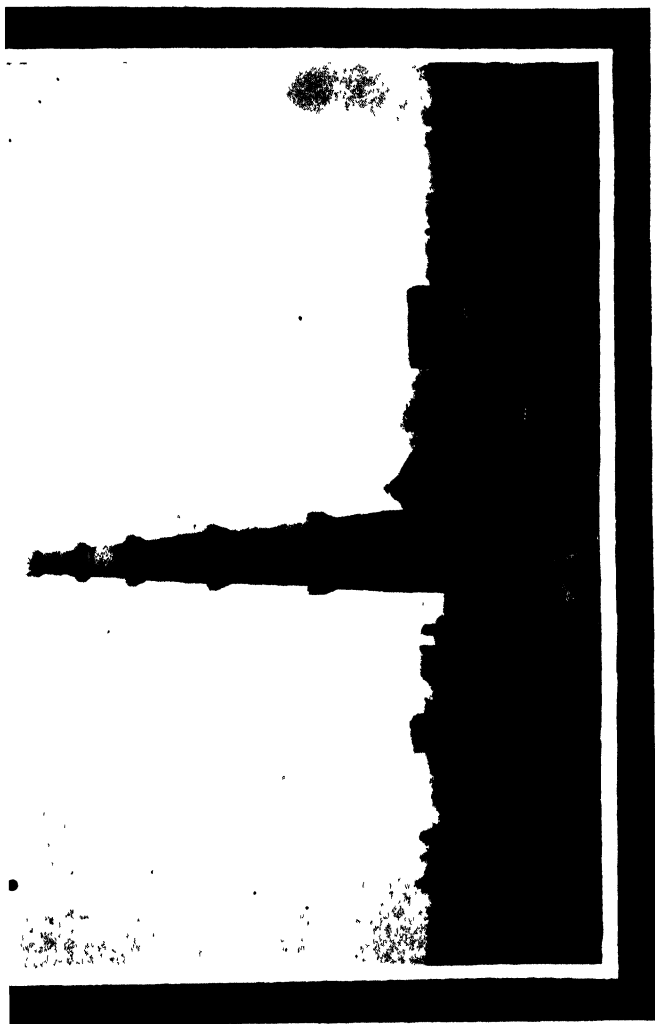


The Fort. Delhi

lakabad, four miles south-east of Siri and five miles east of old Delhi, built by Muhammad Tughlak Shah (1320).

An early morning drive allows one to see in comfort the breach near the Kashmir Gate (Ali Burj). Here, towards the close of 1906, Lord Minto unveiled the statue of John Nicholson, than which there is no greater name in the British annals of India. Near by is the tomb where his body lies. Let us recall the story of the Kashmir Gate. Things had become desperate. A final coup was necessary and time was short. A band of volunteers, led by Lieutenant Salkeld, decided to make one great attempt to break the gate. Advancing in broad daylight, amidst a hail of lead from every side, powder bags were laid and adjusted. Lieutenant Salkeld was just about to do the final deed when he was shot through the arm and leg. He handed over the match to Corporal Burgess. Scarcely had he applied it than he fell mortally wounded. A deafening crash followed and the brave men who had performed that which brought victory to the British, had been blown into a million pieces. Another moment and Nicholson, than whom no Englishman in India has ever been more worshipped, more loved by his sepoy, led the charge. Scarcely had he started before he was shot down. He lingered nine days, heard that Delhi was in the hands of the English, and for that was happy. He cared nothing for himself, only that he had done his duty.

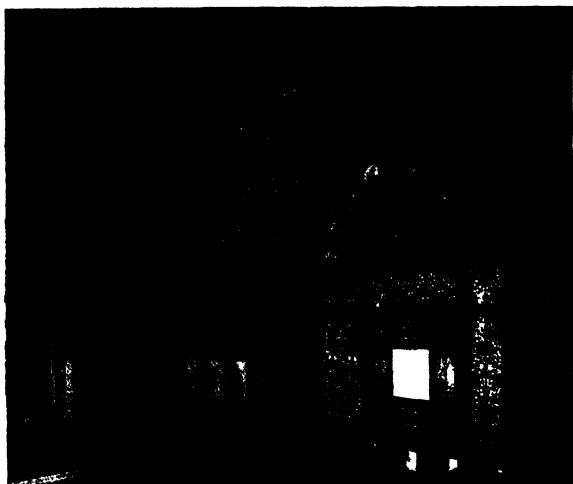
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**Kutab Minar, Delhi.**

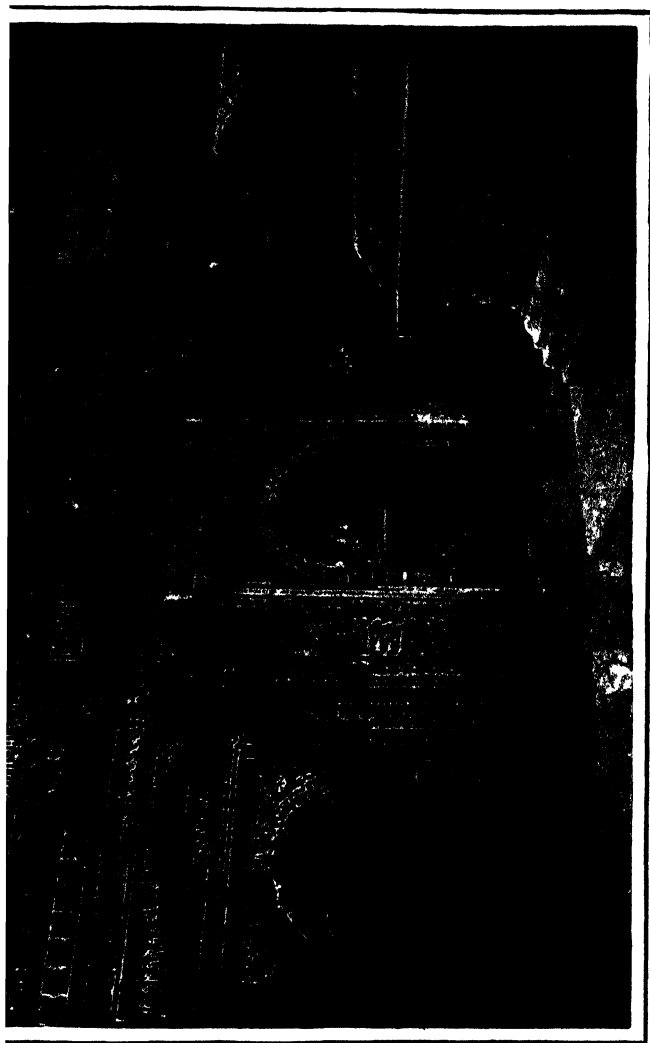
No man can view the spot to-day and conjure up the scene without a lump filling his throat and his eyes becoming dim and—because they are Englishmen—few trouble to hide it.

From here one may well drive to another spot hallowed by the days of the Mutiny. On the



Diwan-i-Khas, Delhi.

eleventh of May, 1857, fifty Christian people, men, women and children, were brought into the palace and placed in an underground room which had but one door and no window. Here they were kept for five days till at last they were brought out into the courtyard and hacked to pieces; four months later their memory had been avenged and the British, assembled in the Diwan-i-Khas, uttered the prayer that was the thanksgiving for all that



**Tomb of Shamsuddin, Delhi**



had been granted, "not unto us, O Lord, not unto us but unto Thy name be the praise."

Than the Diwan-i-Khas nothing more ornate



Hindu Colonnade at the Kutab Minar, Delhi.

could be conceived. The square pillars rise a mass of inlaid wealth, supporting noble arches, all of purest white, save where arate and jasper, jade and



The Iron Pillar, Kutab Minar, Delhi.

porphyry and alabaster trace out the floral scroll. A white marble slab raised on four legs once carried the Peacock Throne, long since taken to Persia, where it has been despoiled of its precious stones to provide money and jewellery for the harem. Near it is the Moti Musjid, the private mosque of the Kings of Delhi, the purest religious building in India. The latticed wall of the Diwan-i-Khas looks out on another courtyard where the ladies of the harem took the morning and



Courtyard of Jumma Musjid.

evening air. In a thick wall close by is pointed out a low door half sunk in the ground, through which the last King of Delhi fled to Humayun's Tomb, only to be captured and brought back to judgment and death.

A short drive from the Fort brings one to one of the most ancient relics of India. In 263 B.C., Asoka came to the throne of the Empire of Magadha, and under him it extended till it became the greatest Empire India had then known. History shows that in his early years he was

characterised by great brutality, but the horrors of the conquest of Kalinga preyed upon his mind, and eleven years after his coronation, he openly embraced the Buddhist religion. From that time he became one of its most ardent supporters, and Northern India contains many inscriptions which he caused to be made on rocks, caves and pillars. Two of these latter were brought to Delhi from Mirat (Meerut) by Firoz Shah in 1350. One rests on the summit of the Kotila, and around it is inscribed an edict which for a long time baffled translation. These edicts were to set forth the truth of the Buddhist religion and in each of them he styles himself "King Piyadasi," "The Beloved of the Gods."

A careful translation has become possible through the discovery of the method of writing and the great James Prinsep has left the following translation of Edicts at Delhi :—

### EDICT I.

#### NORTH SIDE.

- "Thus spake king Devanampiya Piyadasi :—' In the twenty-seventh year of my anointment, I have caused this religious edict to be published in writing. I acknowledge and confess the faults that have been cherished in my heart. From the love of virtue, by the side of which all other things are as sins, from the strict scrutiny of sin and from fervent desire to be sold of sin, by the fear of sin and by very enormity of sin ; by these may my eyes be strengthened and confirmed (in rectitude).

“ ‘ The sight of religion, and the love of religion, of their own accord increase and will ever increase : and my people, whether of the laity (grihist) or of the priesthood (ascetics), all mortal beings, are knit together thereby, and prescribe to themselves the same path : and, above all, having obtained the mastery over their passions, they become supremely wise. For this is indeed true wisdom : it is upheld and bound by (it consists in) religion ; by religion which cherishes, religion which teaches pious acts, religion which bestows (the only true) pleasure.’ ”

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### EDICT II.

“ Thus spake king Devanampiya Piyadasi :— ‘ In religion is the chief excellence ; but religion consists in good works : in the non-omission of many acts ; mercy and charity, purity and chastity ; (these are) to me the anointment of consecration. Towards the poor and the afflicted, towards bipeds and quadrupeds, towards the fowls of the air and things that move in the waters, manifold have been the benevolent acts performed by me. Out of consideration for things inanimate even many other excellent things have been done by me. To this purpose is the present edict promulgated ; let all pay attention to it (or take cognizance thereof), and let it endure for ages to come : and he who acts in conformity thereto the same shall attain eternal happiness (or shall be united with Sugato).”

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### EDICT III.

“ Thus spake king Devanampiya Piyadasi :— ‘ Whatever appeareth to me to be virtuous and good, that is so held to be good and virtuous by me, and not the less if it will have evil tendency, is it accounted for evil by me or is it named among the asinave (the nine offences ?). Eyes are given (to man) to distinguish between the two qualities (between right and wrong) : according to the capacity of the eyes so may they behold.

“ ‘The following are accounted among the nine minor transgressions—mischief, hard-heartedness, anger, pride envy. These evil deeds of nine kinds shall on no account be mentioned. They should be regarded as opposite (or prohibited). Let this (ordinance) be impressed on my heart, let it be cherished with all my soul.’ ”

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## EDICT IV.

### WEST SIDE.

“ Thus spake king Piyadasi, beloved of the gods :—‘ In the twenty-seventh year of my anointment, I have caused to be promulgated the following religious edict. My devotees in very many hundred thousand souls having (now) attained unto knowledge, I have ordained (the following) fines and punishments for their transgressions. Wherever devotees shall abide around (or circumambulate) the holy fig tree for the performance of pious duties, the benefit and pleasure of the country and its inhabitants shall be (in making) offerings and according to their generosity or otherwise shall they enjoy or prosperity or adversity : and they shall give thanks for the coming of the faith. Whatever villages with their inhabitants may be given or maintained for the sake of the worship, the devotees shall receive the same, and for an example for my people they shall follow after (or exercise solitary) austerities. And, likewise, whatever blessings they shall pronounce, by these shall my devotees accumulate for the worship (?). Furthermore, the people shall attend in the night the great myrabolam tree and the holy fig tree. My people shall foster (accumulate) the great myrabolam. Pleasure is to be eschewed, as intoxication (?).

“ ‘ My devotees doing thus for the profit and pleasure of the village, whereby they (coming) around the beauteous and holy fig tree may cheerfully abide in the performance of pious acts. In this also are fines and punishments for the transgressions of my devotees appointed. Much to be

desired is such renown ! According to the measure of the offence (the destruction of the viya or happiness ?) shall be the measure of the punishment, but (the offender) shall not be put to death by me. Banishment (shall be) the punishment of those malefactors deserving of imprisonment and execution. Of those who commit murder on the high road (dacoits ?) even none whether of the poor or of the rich, shall be injured (tortured) on my (three) special days (?) Those guilty of cruelly beating or slaughtering living things, having escaped mutilation (through my clemency) shall give alms (as a *deodand*) and shall also undergo the penance of fasting. And thus it is my desire that the protection of even the workers of opposition shall tend to (the support of) the worship ; and (on the other hand) the people, whose righteousness increases in every respect, shall spontaneously partake of my benevolence.' "

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## EDICT V.

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### SOUTH SIDE.

"Thus spake king Devanampiya Piyadasi :—'In the twenty-seventh year of my anointment the following animals shall not be put to death : the parrot, the maina (or thrush), the wild duck of the wilderness, the goose, the bull-faced owl, the vulture, the bat, the ambaka-pillaka, the raven, and the common crow, the vedaveyaka, the adjutant, the sankujamava, the kaphatasayaka, the panasasesimala, the sandaka, the okapadá, those that go in pairs, the white dove and the domestic pigeon. Among all four-footed animals the following shall not be for food, they shall not be eaten : the she-goats of various kinds, and the sheep and the sow, either when heavy with young or when giving milk. Unkilled birds of every sort for the desire of the flesh shall not be put to death. The same being alive shall not be injured, whether because of their uselessness or for the sake of amusement they shall not be injured. Animals that prey on

life shall not be cherished. In the three four-monthly periods (of the year) on the evening of the full moon, during the three (holy) days, namely, the fourteenth, the fifteenth, and the first day after conjunction, in the midst of the uposatha ceremonies (or strict fasts), unkilld things (or live fish ?) shall not be exposed for sale. Yea, on these days neither the snake tribe, nor the feeder on fish (alligators), nor any living beings whatsoever shall be put to death.

“ ‘ On the eighth day of the paksha (or half month) on the fourteenth, on the fifteenth, on (the days when the moon is in the mansions of) tirsha or punurvasa : on these several days in the three four-monthly periods, the ox shall not be tended : the goat, the sheep, and the pig, if indeed any be tended (for domestic use) shall not then be tended. On the tirsha or the punurvassa of every four months, and of every paksha or semilunation of the four months it is forbidden to keep (for labour) either the horse or the ox.

“ Furthermore, in the twenty-seventh year of my reign, at this present time, twenty-five prisoners are set at liberty.’ ”

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## EDICT VI.

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### SOUTH SIDE.

“ Thus spake king Devanampiya Piyadasi :—‘ In the twelfth year of my anointment, a religious edict (was) published for the pleasure and the profit of the world ; having destroyed that (document) and regarding my former religion as sin, I now for the benefit of the world proclaim the fact. And this (among my nobles, among my near relations, and among my dependants, whatsoever pleasure I may thus abandon) I therefore cause to be destroyed ; and I proclaim the same in all the congregations ; while I pray with every variety of prayer for those who differ from me in creed, that they, following after my proper example, may



with me attain unto eternal salvation : wherefore the present edict of religion is promulgated in this twenty-seventh year of my anointment.' ”

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### EDICT VII.

“ Thus spake king Devanampiya Piyadasi :—‘ Kings of the olden time have gone to heaven under these very desires. How then among mankind may religion ( or growth in grace ) be increased ? Through the conversion of the humbly born shall religion increase.’ ”

“ Thus spake king Devanampiya Piyadasi :—‘ The present moment and the past have departed under the same ardent hopes. How by the conversion of the royal-born may religion be increased ? Through the conversion of the lowly-born if religion thus increaseth, by how much ( more ) through the conviction of the high-born, and their conversion, shall religion increase ? Among whomsoever the name of God resteth ( ? ) verily this is religion, ( or verily virtue shall there increase ).’ ”

“ Thus spake king Devanampiya Piyadasi :—‘ Wherefore from this very hour I have caused religious discourses to be preached ; I have appointed religious observances that mankind having listened thereto shall be brought to follow in the right path and give glory unto God.’ ” (*Agm ?*)

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### EDICT VIII.

“ Moreover, along with the increase of religion, opposition will increase : for which reason I appointed sermons to be preached and I have established ordinances of every kind ; through the efficacy of which, the misguided having acquired true knowledge, shall proclaim it on all sides ( ? ) and shall become active in upholding its duties. The disciples, too, flocking in vast multitudes ( many hundred thousand souls ). Let these likewise receive my command, ‘ In such wise do

ye, too, address, on all sides (or as comfortably ?) the people united in religion.' ”

“ King Devanampiya Piyadasi thus spake :—‘ Thus among the present generation have I endowed establishments, appointed men very wise in the faith, and done..... for the faith.’ ”

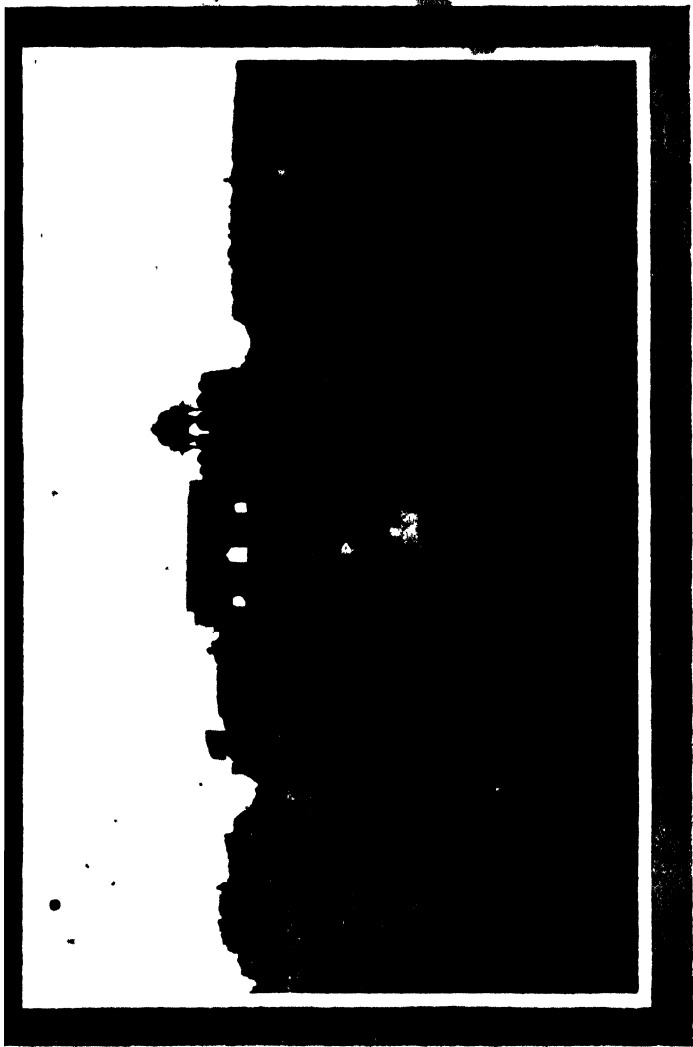
“ King Devanampiya Piyadasi again spake as follows :— ‘ Along the high-roads I have caused fig trees to be planted, that they may be for shade to animals and men ; I have (also) planted mango trees and at every half *coss* I have caused wells to be constructed, and (resting places ?) for nights to be erected. And how many taverns (or serais) have been erected by me at various places for the entertainment of man and beast ! So that as the people, finding the road to every species of pleasure and conveniences in these places of entertainment, these new towns (vayapuri ?) rejoiceth under my rule, so let them thoroughly appreciate and follow after the same (system of benevolence). This is my object, and thus I have done.’ ”

“ Thus spake king Devanampiya Piyadasi :—‘ Let the priests deeply versed in the faith (or let my doctrines ?) penetrate among the multitudes of the rich capable of granting favours, and let them penetrate alike among all the unbelievers, whether of ascetics or of householders and let them penetrate into the assemblies ( ? ) for my sake. Moreover, let them for my sake find their way among the Brahmins and the most destitute ; and among those who have abandoned domestic life, for my sake let them penetrate ; and among various unbelievers for my sake let them find their way :—yea use your utmost endeavours among these several classes, that the wise men, these men learned in the religion (or these doctrines of my religion) may penetrate among these respectively as well as among all unbelievers.’ ”

“ Thus spake king Devanampiya Piyadasi :— ‘ And let these priests and others the most skilful in the sacred offices penetrating among the charitably disposed of other queens and princes for the purpose (of imparting) religious enthusiasm and thorough religious instruction. And this is the true religious devotion, this the sum of religious instruction, *vis.*, that it shall increase the mercy and charity, the truth and purity, the kindness and honesty of the world.’ ”

“ Thus spake king Devanampiya Piyadasi :— ‘ And whatsoever benevolent acts have been done by me, the same shall be prescribed as duties to the people who follow after me : and in this (manner) shall their influence and increase be manifest, by doing service to father and mother ; by doing service to spiritual pastors ; by respectful demeanour to the aged and full of years, and by condescension to Brahmans and Sramans, to the orphan and destitute, to servants and the minstrel tribe.’ ”

“ King Devanampiya Piyadasi again spake :— ‘ And religion increaseth among men by two separate processes, by performance of religious offices and by security against persecution. Accordingly, that religious offices and immunities might abound among multitudes, I have observed the ordinances myself as the apple of my eye (?) (as testified by) all these animals which have been saved from slaughter, and by manifold other virtuous acts performed on my behalf. And that the religion may be from the presecution of men, increasing from the absolute prohibition to put to death living beings, or to sacrifice aught that draweth breath. For such an object is all this done, that it may endure to my sons and their sons’ sons as long as the sun and moon shall last. Wherefore let them follow its injunctions and be obedient thereto and let it be had in reverence and respect. In the twenty-seventh year of my reign have I caused this edict to be written (so sayeth Devanampiya). Let stone pillars be prepared and let this edict of religion be engraven thereon, that it may endure unto the remotest ages.’ ”



Entrance to Purana Kila, or Old Fort, Delhi.

Beyond lies Indrapat, where are the Lal Darwazah, the north gate of the Delhi of Sher Shah, and the Purana Kila, where is the mosque of Sher Shah consisting of one great central arch and dome with two arches flanking either side. There is also the Sher Mandal, which is notable as the place on the steps of which the Emperor Humayun slipped when rising from evening prayer and was killed. The road leads on to the Dargah of Nizam-ud-din Aulia, and a branch to the tomb of Humayun, the second great Moghal Emperor, past the tomb of Isa Khan.

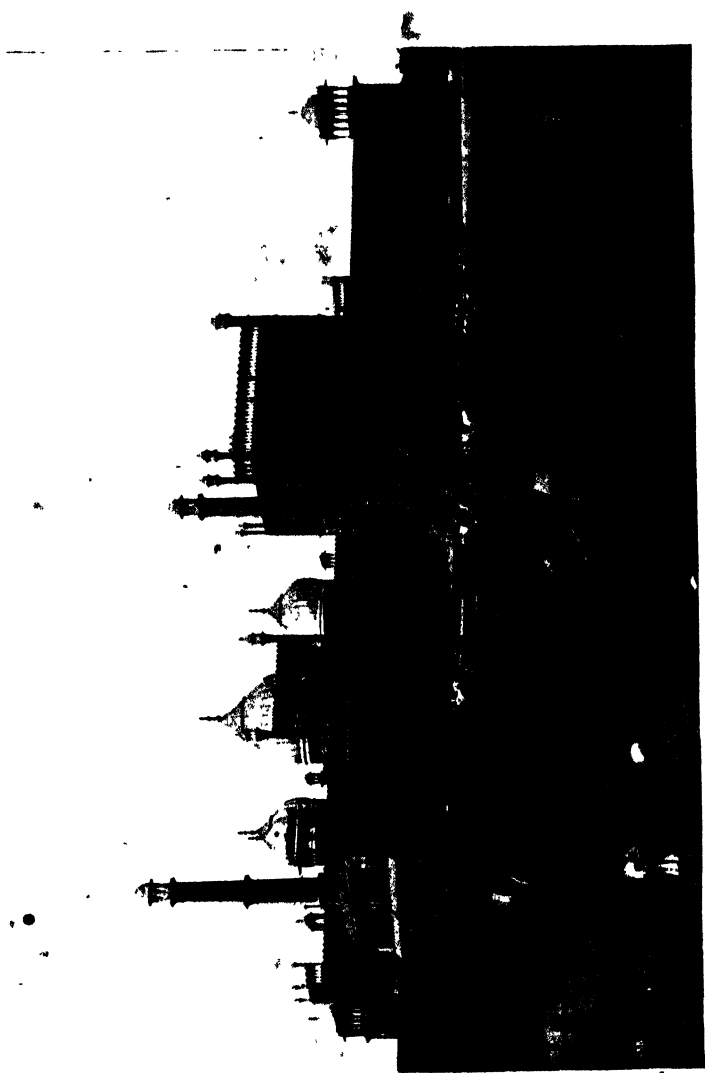
From a religious point of view the Dargah of Sheik Nizam-ud-din is far more important for, with the other Chisti shrines at Ajmere, the Kutab (or, as the milestones spell it, Qtab), it is one of the chief places of Mahomedan reverence in all India. The entrance gate bears the date 1378, and was built by the Emperor Firoz Shah Tughlak. As one enters there are two old Pathan tombs, near one of which is a mosque of two stories, a style rarely found. The way leads on to a deep tank where naked boys dive from a high dome at the side and rush round to collect *bakshis*. Near the foot of the steps leading down, an archway is said to lead to the cell occupied by the saint. Inside the third gate is a receptacle for milk and sweetmeats, offerings of the rich for poor pilgrims who flock here, and a few yards further is the shrine of the saint into which no infidel must enter. Like the shrine at Fatehpur Sikri



the tomb is most exquisitely inlaid with mother-o'-pearl and it bears the name of the *Kiblahgah-i-Khas-o-am* or the "Place of prayer to which all great and small turn." Further on, is the grave of the poet Khusrau, who wrote the "Bagh-o-Bahar" and at the side, within a carved marble enclosure the grave of Jahanara Begam, daughter of Shah Jehan. On the top grows some brown rank grass, and at the north stands a stone with verses supposed to have been written by the Princess—"Let green grass only conceal my grave; grass is the best covering of the grave of the meek." In another enclosure lies the tomb of Muhammad Shah, who died in 1748 after the capture of Delhi by Nadir Shah.

Beyond, on the road to Kutab, lies the decaying tomb of Nawab Saftdar Jang, a handsome pile which sadly needs attention and covers the most humble of graves, a rough heap of earth. It was Saftdar Jang who called in the Jats, and so was responsible for the fall of the Moghal Empire. Four ornate towers complete the cornices supporting pilared domes. Arches and pillars with minarets at each side break the line of the roof which is already decorated and the great dome rises from the centre—one of the last great Mahomedan works in India.

Thence the journey to Kutab is unbroken. Here side by side are the two pillars, one only about thirty feet high beside the great Minar, which towers up into the sky, one of the most wonderful towers in the world. A climb to the summit, no



Jumma Masjid, Delhi.



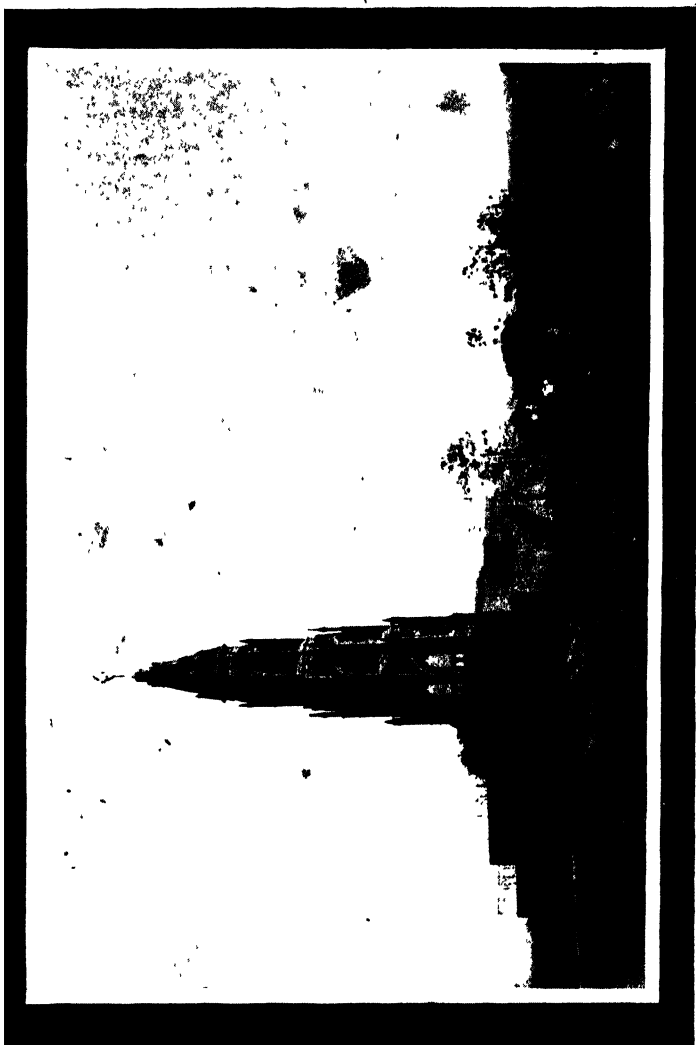
light task in the middle of the day, gives one an idea of the extent of the city as it originally was ; nearly all now, however, is in ruin.

Here is the tomb of Altamash, the first of the Moghul conquerors, surrounded by walls which are absolutely devoid of Hindu design. Elsewhere is the mosque of Kutab-ud-din, built, internally, entirely of Jain material and probably by Jain workmen. A rough road leads on to a deep well where men dive down a tube of nearly seventy feet, a trade which is handed down through generations rarely leaving more than one to rear a family to carry on the tradition. For accidents are frequent and there is no doubt that the boys are taught the dive by cruelty.

One can wander round the Kutab for two days with profit. On every side, crowded together, are remains of mosques, audience halls, or the offices of State. But ruin has touched everything and nothing is left intact.

Returning by the direct road to Delhi, instead of turning off at Saftdar Jang's tomb one comes to the observatory of Raja Jai Sing of Jaipur and so back to Delhi.

There yet remains to be seen the great Jumma Musjid. Approached by a lofty flight of red steps, a high gate gives on to the great courtyard. The mosque was built by Shah Jehan, and it consists of a magnificent arch in the centre of a long vaulted aisle, carved on the face of which are finely



**Martyrs' Memorial on the Ridge, Delhi**

executed quotations from the Koran. These great domes crown the roof and at either side enormously-tall minarets rise up to heaven, executed, as is the whole, in black and white marble. At the other side of the huge courtyard is a gilded shrine where a priest exhibits relics of the Prophet, a hair, a verse of the Koran, a pair of slippers and some flowers.

And then a long drive round by the Ridge, turning on to the Mutiny memorial, brings one's mind back to that which makes Delhi sacred to all Englishmen.

Once more one recalls the heroism of the past.

Lord God of Hosts be with us yet !  
Lest we forget ! Lest we forget !

